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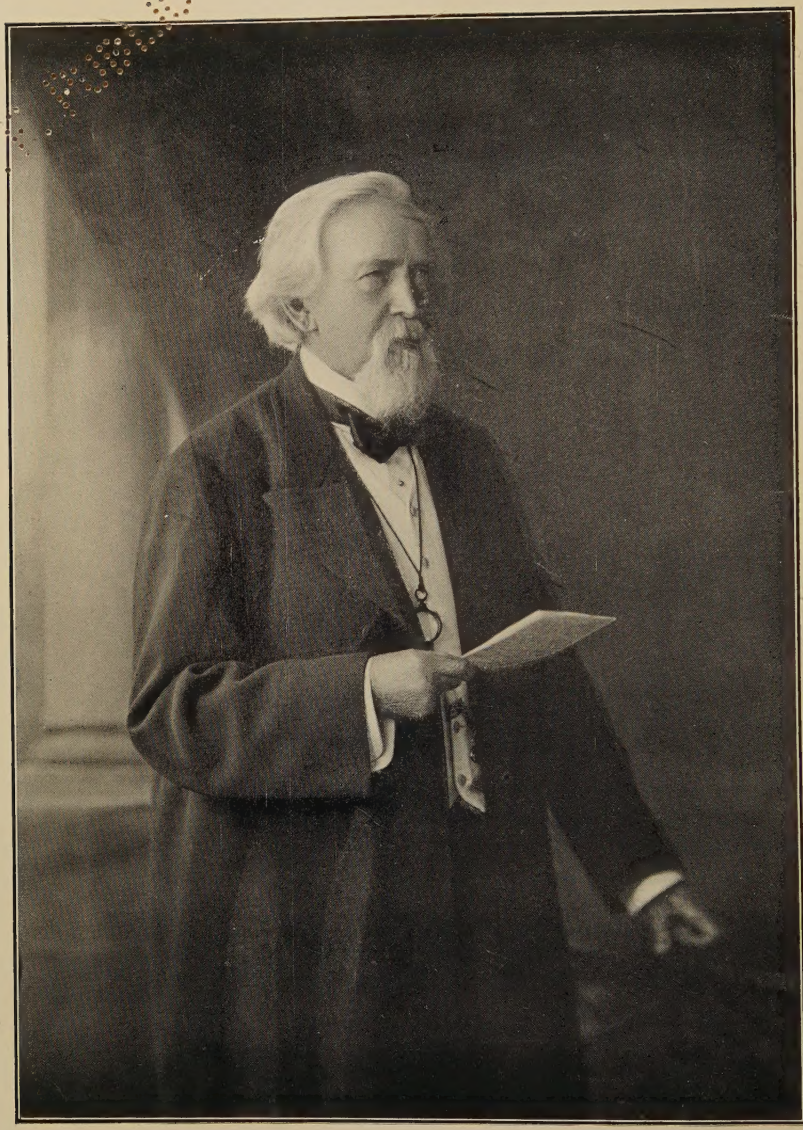

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

In his 88th year.

Photo by Kent & Lacey

Frontispiece. (Vol. II.)

BYGONES WORTH REMEMBERING

BY

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE

"Look backward only to correct an error of conduct for the next attempt"
GEORGE MEREDITH

VOLUME II

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CHAPTER XXIV

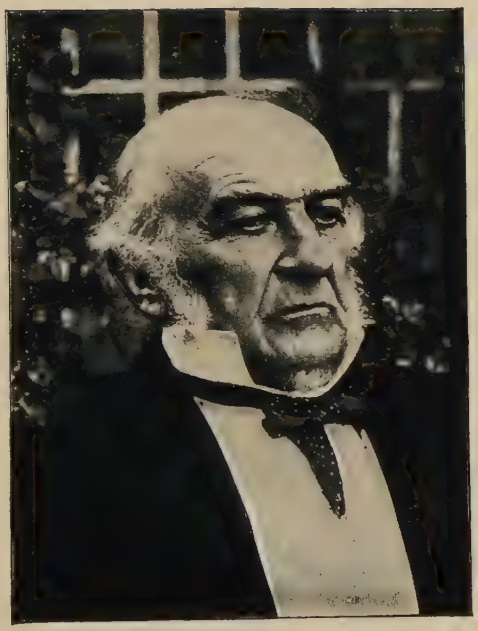
CONVERSATIONS WITH MR. GLADSTONE

WERE I to edit a new journal again I should call it *Open Thought*. I know no characteristic of man so wise, so useful, so full of promise of progress as this. The great volume of Nature, of Man and of Society opens a new page every day, and Mr. Gladstone read it. It was this which gave him that richness of information in which he excited the admiration of all who conversed with him.

Were Plutarch at hand to write Historical Parallels of famous men of our time, he might compare Voltaire and Gladstone. Dissimilar as they were in nature, their points of resemblance were notable. Voltaire was the most conspicuous man in Europe in the eighteenth century, as Mr. Gladstone became in the nineteenth. Both were men of wide knowledge beyond all their contemporaries. Each wrote more letters than any other man was ever known to write. Every Court in

Europe was concerned about the movements of each, in his day. Both were deliverers of the oppressed, where no one else moved on their behalf. Both attained great age, and were ceaselessly active to the last. In decision of conviction they were also alike. Voltaire was as determinedly Theistic as Mr. Gladstone was Christian. They were alike also in the risks they undertook in defence of the right. Voltaire risked his life and Gladstone his reputation to save others. Mr. Morley relates of the Philosopher of Ferney, that when he made his triumphal journey through Paris, some one asked a woman in the street "why do so many people follow this man?" "Don't you know?" was the reply. "He was the deliverer of the Calas." No applause went to Voltaire's heart like that. Mr. Gladstone had also golden memories of deliverance no one else moved hand or foot to effect, and multitudes, even nations, followed him because of that.

On the first occasion of my going to breakfast with him he was living in Harley Street, in the house in which Sir Charles Lyell died. As Mr. Gladstone entered the room, he apologised for not greeting me earlier, as his servant had indistinctly given him my name. He asked me to sit next to him at breakfast. There were seven or eight guests. The only one I knew was Mr. Walter. H. James, M.P., since Lord Northbourne—probably present from consideration for me. One was the



WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

To face page 10. (Vol. II.)

editor of the *Jewish World*, a journal opposed to Mr. Gladstone's anti-Turkish policy. Others were military officers and travellers of contemporary renown. It was a breakfast to remember—Mr. Gladstone displayed such a bright, unembarrassed vivacity. He told amusing anecdotes of the experiences of the wife of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whose charm he said he could only describe by the use of the English rural term "buxom." On making a time-bargain with a cabman, he observed to her ladyship that "he wished the engagement was for life." Mr. Gladstone thought no English cabman would have said that. Another pleasantry was of one of Lord Lyttelton's sons, who was very tall and lank. He being in Birmingham and wishful to know the distance to a place he sought, asked a boy in the street who was passing, "how far it was." "Oh, not far," was the assuring but indefinite answer. "But can you not give me some better idea of the distance?" Mr. Lyttelton inquired. "Well, sir," said the lad, looking up at the obelisk-like interrogator before him, "if you was to fall down, you would be half way there."

These incidents were not new to me, but I was glad to hear what was probably the origin of them. From Mr. Gladstone's lips they had a sort of historic reality which was interesting to me.

Afterwards he spoke of the singular beauty

of the "Dream of Gerontius" by Cardinal Newman, and turning to me asked if I knew of it, as though he thought it unlikely my reading lay in that direction. He was very much surprised when I said I had read it with great admiration. He said it was strange, as he had mentioned the poem at three or four breakfast tables, without finding any one who knew it.

As I left, Mr. Gladstone accompanied me downstairs. On the way I took occasion to thank him for a paper that had appeared in the *Contemporary*, containing definitions of heretical forms of thought, so fair and accurate and actual, that Shakespeare or Bunyan, who had the power of possessing himself of the minds of those whose thoughts he expressed, might have produced. There had been nothing to compare with it in my time. Theological writers described heterodox tenets from their inferences of what they must be—never inquiring what they actually stood for in the minds of those who held them—whereas he had written with unimputative knowledge. Stopping on the first platform of the stairway we reached, he paused, and (holding the lapel of his coat with his hand, as I had seen him do in the House of Commons) he said he was glad I was able to think so, "for that is the quality in which you yourself excel." This amazed me, as I never imagined that he had ever taken notice of speeches or writings of mine, or formed any opinion upon them. Nor

was he the man to say what I cite from mere courtesy.

The second time I breakfasted in Harley Street was in the days of the Eastern question. Mr. John Morley was one of the party. Mr. Gladstone had again the same disengaged manner. Before his guests broke up he entered the room, bearing on his arm a pile of letters and telegrams, and apologised for leaving us as he had to attend to them. That morning Mr. Bright came in, and seeing me, said, "Poor Acland is dead. Of course there was nothing in the house, and a few of us had to subscribe to bury him." James Acland was the rider on a white horse who preceded Cobden and Bright the day before their arrival to address the farmers on the anti-Corn Law tour in the counties. Mr. Gladstone's grand-daughter was to have arrived at Harley Street that morning, but her nurse missed the train. When she appeared, Bright, who had suggested dolorous adventures to account for her non-appearance, proposed, when the child was announced to be upstairs, that a charge of sixpence should be made for each person going to see her.

That morning one of the guests, who was an actor, maintained that it was not necessary that an actor should feel his part. Mr. Gladstone, to whom conviction was his inspiration—who never spoke without believing what he said—dissented from the actor's theory, as I had done.

Towards the end of his life, I saw Mr. Gladstone twice at the Lion Mansion in Brighton. On one occasion he said, after speaking of Cardinal Newman and his brother Francis, "I remember Dr. Martineau telling me that there was a third brother, a man also of remarkable power, but he was touched somewhere here," putting his finger to his forehead. "Do you know whether it was so? It is so long since Dr. Martineau named it to me, and my impression may be wrong." I answered, "It was true. At one time I had correspondence with Charles Newman. He would say at times, 'My mind is going from me for a time. Do not expect to hear from me until my mind returns.' In power of reasoning, he was, when he did reason, distinguished for boldness and vigour." Mr. Gladstone said, "When you write again to his brother Francis, convey to him for me the assurance of my esteem. I am glad you believe that the cessation in his correspondence was not occasioned by anything on my part or any change of feeling on his. I must have been mistaken if I ever described Mr. Francis Newman as 'a man of considerable talent.' He was much more than that. His powers of mind may be said to amount to genius."

Mr. Gladstone asked what I would advise as a rule of policy as to the Anarchists who threw the bombs in the French Chambers. I answered, "There were serious men who came to have

Anarchical views from despair of the improvement of society. There were also foolish Anarchists who think they can put the world to rights, had they a clear field before them. There are also a class who are quite persuaded that by killing people who have nothing to do with the evils they complain of, they will intimidate those who have. They take destruction to be a mode of progress. These persons are as mad as they are made, and you cannot legislate against insanity."

I mentioned the case of a Nonconformist minister, who was so incensed by the injustice done to Mr. Bradlaugh that he took a revolver, loaded, to Palace Yard, intending to shoot the policemen who maltreated him. But the member for Northampton was altogether against such proceedings. The determined rectifier of wrong in question had a project of throwing a bomb from the gallery on to the floor of the House. I had great difficulty in dissuading him from this frightful act. He was no coward, and was quite prepared to sacrifice his own life. To those ebullitions of vengeance society in every age has been subject, and its best protection lies in intrepid disdain and cool precaution. The affair of Phœnix Park showed that the English nation did not go mad in the face of desperate outrage. However, Mr. Gladstone himself gave the best answer to his inquiry. He said, "The Spanish Government had solicited him to join in a federation against Anarchists. But how could we do

that? We cannot tell what other Governments may do, and we should be held responsible for their acts which we might deplore."

He added, "It fills me with surprise, not to say disgust, to see it said at times in Liberal papers that the Tories of to-day are superior to their class formerly. Sir Robert Peel was a man of high honour, patriotism, and self-respect. He would never have joined in nor countenanced the treatment to which Mr. Bradlaugh was subjected. I never knew the Tories do a meaner thing. Nothing could have induced Sir Robert Peel to consent to that."

On one occasion, after reference to out-of-the-way persons of whom I happened to have some knowledge, Mr. Gladstone said, "I have known many remarkable men. My position has brought me in contact with numbers of persons." Indeed, it seemed when talking to him that you were talking to mankind, so diversified and plentiful were the persons living in his memory, and who, as it were, stepped out in his conversation before you. The individuality, the environment of persons, all came into light. His conversation was like an oration in miniature. Its exactness, its modulation, its force of expression, its foreseeingness of all the issues of ideas, came at will. I never listened to conversation so easy, so natural, so precise, so full of colour and truth, spoken with such spontaneity and force.

Mr. Morley, in his "Life of Gladstone," cites a letter he sent to me in 1875: "Differing from you, I do not believe that secular motives are adequate either to propel or restrain the children of our race, but I earnestly desire to hear the other side, and I appreciate the advantage of having it stated by sincere and high-minded men." This shows his brave open-mindedness.

A few years later it came into my mind that my expressions of respect for persons whose Christian belief arose from honest conviction, and was associated with efforts for the improvement of the material condition of the people, might lead him to suppose that I myself inclined to belief in Christian tenets of faith. I therefore sent him my new book on "The Origin and Nature of Secularism: Showing that where Free Thought commonly ends Secularism begins"—saying that as I had the honour of his correspondence, I ought not to leave him unaware of the nature of my own opinions. He answered that he thought my motive a right one in sending the book to him, and that he had read a considerable part with general concurrence, though, in other parts, the views expressed were painful to him. But this made no difference in his friendship, which continued to the end of his days.

An unknown aphorist of 1750, whom Mr. Bertram Dobell quotes, exclaims: "Freethinker! What a term of honour; or, if you will, dishonour; but

where is he who can claim it?" Mr. Gladstone might claim it beyond any other eminent Christian I have known. It was he who, at the opening of the Liverpool College some years ago, warned the clergy that "they could no longer defend their tenets by railing or reticence"—a shaft that went through the soul of that policy of silence and defamation pursued by them for half a century. Mr. Gladstone was the first to see it must be abandoned.

It is Diderot who relates that one who was searching for a path through a dark forest by the light of a taper, met a man who said to him, "Friend, if thou wouldst find thy way here, blow out thy light." The taper was Reason, and the man who said blow it out was a priest. Mr. Gladstone would have said, "Take care of that taper, friend; and if you can convert it into a torch do so, for you will need it to see your way through the darkness of human life."

At our last interview he said, "You and I are growing old. The day is nearing when we shall enter——" Here he paused, as though he was going to say another life, but not wishing to say what I might not concur in, in his sense, he—before his pause was well noticeable—added, "enter a changed state." What my views were he knew, as I had told him in a letter: "I hope there is a future life, and, if so, my not being sure of it will not prevent it, and I know of no better way of deserving it than

by conscious service of humanity. The universe never filled me with such wonder and awe as when I knew I could not account for it. I admit ignorance is a privation. But to submit not to know, where knowledge is withheld, seems but one of the sacrifices that reverence for truth imposes on us."

I had reason to acknowledge his noble personal courtesy, notwithstanding convictions of mine he must think seriously erroneous, upon which, as I told him, "I did not keep silence."

He had the fine spirit of the Abbé Lamennais, who, writing of a book of mark depicting the "passive" Christian, said: "The active Christian who is ceaselessly fighting the enemies of humanity, without omitting to pardon and love them—of this type of Christian I find no trace whatever." Mr. Gladstone was of that type. It was his distinction that he applied this affectionate tolerance not only to the "enemies of humanity," but to the dissentients from the faith he loved so well.

At our last meeting in Brighton he asked my address, and said he would call upon me. He wished me to know Lord Acton, whom he would ask to see me. An official engagement compelled Lord Acton to defer his visit, of which Mr. Gladstone sent me notice. It was a great loss not to converse with one who knew so much as Lord Acton did.

Mr. Gladstone knew early what many do not know yet, that courtesy and even honour to adversaries do not imply coincidence in opinion. As I was for the right of free thought, I regarded all manifestations of it with interest, whether coinciding with or opposing views I hold. Shortly before his death I wrote to him, when Miss Helen Gladstone sent me word, "To-day I read to my father your letter, by which he was much touched and pleased, and he desired me to send you his best thanks." I shall always be proud to think that any words of mine gave even momentary pleasure to one who has given delight to millions, and will be an inspiration to millions more.

In former times, when an eminent woman contributed to the distinction of her consort, he alone received the applause. In these more discriminating days, when the noble companionship of a wife has made her husband's eminence possible, honour is due to her also. Therefore, on drawing the resolution of condolence to Mrs. Gladstone, adopted at the Peterborough Co-operative Congress, we made the acknowledgment how much was due to the wife as well as the husband. I believe no resolution sent to her, but ours, did this. Sympathy is not enough where honour is due.

In the splendid winter of Mr. Gladstone's days there was no ice in his heart. Like the light that ever glowed in the temple of Montezuma the

generous fire of his enthusiasm never went out. The nation mourned his loss with a pomp of sorrow more deep and universal than ever exalted the memory of a king.

CHAPTER XXV

HERBERT SPENCER, THE THINKER

A STAR of the first magnitude went out of the firmament of original thought by the death of Herbert Spencer. His was the most distinctive personality that remained with us after the death of Mr. Gladstone. Spencer was as great in the kingdom of science as Mr. Gladstone was in that of politics and ecclesiasticism. Men have to go back to Aristotle to find Spencer's compeer in range of thought, and to Gibbon for a parallel to his protracted persistence in accomplishing his great design of creating a philosophy of evolution. Mr. Spencer's distinction was that he laid down new landmarks of evolutionary guidance in all the dominions of human knowledge. Gibbon lived to relinquish his pen in triumph at the end of years of devotion to his "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"—Mr. Spencer planned the history of the rise and growth of a mightier, a more magnificent, and more beneficent Empire—that of Universal Law—and for forty years

he pursued his mighty story in every vicissitude of strength with unfaltering purpose, and lived to complete it amid the applause of the world and the gratitude of all who have the grand passion to understand Nature, and advance the lofty destiny of humanity.

Herbert Spencer was born April 27, 1820, in the town of Derby, and died in his eighty-fourth year, December 8, 1903, at 5, Percival Terrace, Brighton, next door to his friend, Sir James Knowles, the editor of the *Nineteenth Century*. At the time of his birth, Derby was emerging from the sleepy, dreamy, stagnant, obfuscated condition in which it had lain since the days of the Romans.

It is difficult to write of Spencer without wondering how a thinker of his quality should have been born in Derby—a town which had a determined objection to individuality in ideas. It has a Charter—its first act of enterprise in a thousand years—obtained by the solicitations of the inhabitants from Richard I., which gave them the power of expelling every Jew who resided in the town, or ever after should approach it. Centuries later, in the reigns of Queen Anne and George I., not a Roman Catholic, an Independent, a Baptist, an Israelite, nor even an unmolesting Quaker could be found in Derby.

There still remains one lineal descendant of the stagnant race which procured the Charter of

Darkness from Richard I.—Mr. Alderman W. Winter, who opposed in the Town Council a resolution of honour in memory of Spencer, who had given Derby its great distinction, because his views contradicted the antediluvian Scriptural account of the Creation, when there was no man present to observe what took place, and no man of science existed capable of verifying the Mosaic tradition. The only recorded instance of independency of opinion was that of a humble Derby girl, who was born blind, yet could see, like others, into the nature of things. She doubted the Real Presence. What could it matter what the poor, helpless thing thought of that? But the town burned her alive. The brave, unchanging girl, whose convictions were torment-proof, was only twenty-two years old.

The only Derby man of free thought who preceded Herbert Spencer was William Hutton, a silk weaver, who became the historian of Derby and Birmingham. In sagacity, boldness and veracity he excelled. The wisdom of his opinions was a century in advance of his time (1770-1830).

There were no photographs in the time of Mr. Spencer's parents, and their lineaments are little known. Mr. Spencer's uncle I knew, the Rev. Thomas Spencer, a clergyman of middle stature, slender, with a paternal Evangelical expression. But his sympathies were with Social Reform, in

which field he was an insurgent worker for projects then unregarded or derided.

When I first knew Mr. Herbert Spencer, he was one of the writers on the *Leader* newspaper. We dined at times at the Whittington Club, then recently founded by Douglas Jerrold. At this period Mr. Spencer had a half-rustic look. He was ruddy, and gave the impression of being a young country gentleman of the sporting farmer type, looking as unlike a philosopher as Thomas Henry Buckle looked like a historian, as he appeared to me on my first interview with him. Mr. Spencer at that time would take part in discussions in a determined tone, and was persistent in definite statement. In that he resembled William Chambers, with whom I was present at a deputation to Lord Derby on the question of the Paper Duty. Lord Derby could not bow him out, nor bow him into silence, until he had stated his case.

In those days Mr. Spencer spoke with misgivings of his health. Mr. Edward Pigott, chief proprietor of the *Leader* (afterwards Public Examiner of Plays) asked me to try to disabuse Mr. Spencer of his apprehensiveness, which was constitutional and never left his mind all his life, and I learned never to greet him in terms which implied that he was, or could be well. Coleridge complained of ailments of which no physical sign was apparent, and he was thought, like Mr. Spencer, to be an imaginary invalid. But after

his death Coleridge was found to have a real cause of suffering, and the wonder was that he did not complain more.

There must be a distinct susceptibility of the nerves—which Sir Michael Foster could explain —peculiar to some persons. I have had two or three friends of some literary distinction, whom I made it a rule never to accost, or even to know when I met them, until they had recovered from the inevitable shock of meeting some unexpected person, when they would spontaneously become genial.

Mr. Spencer's high spirit was shown in this. Though he often had to abandon his thinking, he resumed it on his recovery. The continuity of his thought never ceased. One form of trouble was recurring depression, so difficult to sustain, which James Thompson, who oft experienced it, described—when a man has to endure—

> "The same old solid hills and leas;
> The same old stupid, patient trees;
> The same old ocean, blue and green;
> The same sky, cloudy or serene;
> The old two dozen hours to run
> Between the settings of the sun."

Mr. Spencer was first known to London thinkers by being found the associate of economists like Bagot; philosophers with a turn for enterprise in the kingdom of speculation—as George Henry Lewes, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall; and of great

novelists like George Eliot. In those days the house of John Chapman, the publisher, was the meeting ground of French, Italian, German and other Continental thinkers. There, also, congregated illustrious Americans like Ralph Waldo Emerson, and other unlicensed explorers in the new world of thought. There Mr. Spencer became known to men of mark in America, who made his fame before his countrymen recognised him. If it was England who "raised" Mr. Spencer, it was America that discovered him. Mr. George Iles, a distinguished American friend of Mr. Spencer, sends me information of the validity of American admiration of him, on the authority of the *Daily Witness*: "Mr. Spencer's income is mainly drawn from the sale of his books in America, his copyrights there having yielded him 4,730 dollars in the last six months. A firm of publishers have paid in the last six months royalties amounting nearly to ten thousand dollars to Mr. Herbert Spencer and the heirs or executors of Darwin, Huxley and Tyndall. The sales of Spencer's and Darwin's books lead those of Huxley and Tyndall."

During the earlier publication of his famous volumes, his expenditure in printing and in employing assistants in gathering facts for his arguments, exhausted all his means. Lord Stanley, of that day, was understood to have offered him an appointment, which included leisure for his

investigations. But he declined the thoughtful offer, deeming the office to be of the nature of a sinecure. Wordsworth accepted such an appointment, and repaid the State in song, as Spencer would have repaid it in philosophy.

I had the honour to be Mr. Spencer's outdoor friend. He asked me to make known the publication of his work to persons whom I knew to be friendly to enterprise in thought. For years I assiduously sought to be of service in this way.

One day in 1885, being the guest, in Preston, of the Rev. William Sharman, he showed me a passage in one of Mr. Spencer's volumes, published in 1874, which I had not seen, and which surprised me much, in which it appeared Secularists were below Christians in their sense of fiduciary integrity. Mr. Sharman said, "Defective as we are supposed to be, you will see that Secularists are one degree lower in morality than the clergy." Mr. Spencer had given instances which, in his opinion, "showed that the cultivation of the intellect does not advance morality." If that were so, it would follow that it was better to remain ignorant—if ignorance better develops the ethical sense. The instance Mr. Spencer gives occurs in the "Study of Sociology" (pp. 418–19), "Written to show how little operative on conduct is mere teaching. Let me give, says Mr. Spencer, a striking fact falling under my observation :

"Some twelve years ago was commenced a serial publication, limited in its circulation to the well

educated. It was issued to subscribers, from each of whom was due a small sum for every four numbers. The notification periodically made of another subscription due received from some prompt attention, from others an attention less tardy than before, and from others no attention at all. After a lapse of ten years, a digest was made of the original list, when it was found that those who finally declined paying for what they had year after year received, constituted, among others, the following percentages :

Christian defaulters .... 31 per cent.
Secularist defaulters.... .... 32 per cent."

I wrote to Mr. Spencer as follows :

"Eastern Lodge, Brighton,
"*December* 1, 1885.

"My dear Mr. Spencer,—I am like the sailor who knocked down the Jew, and when he was remonstrated with said, 'He did it because he had crucified his Lord and Saviour.' When told that that occurred 2,000 years ago he answered, 'But I only heard of it last night.'

"It was but a few days ago that your notice of Secularist fraudulency, made in 1874, became known to me.

"From so dispassionate and analytic an authority as yourself, your reflection on the ethical insensibility of Secularists justifies me in asking your attention

to certain facts. By what test did you know that 32 per cent. of defaulters were Secularists? The names I gave you were of persons likely to take in your work if prospectuses were sent to them. But many of them were not Secularists. Some of them were ministers of religion, others Churchmen, but having individually a taste for philosophical inquiry.

"You do not say that these persons sent in their names as subscribers. Yet unless they did, they cannot be justly described 'as regardless of an equitable claim.' Had you informed me of any whose names I gave you, who had not paid for the work, after undertaking to do so, I could have procured you the payment, for all whose names I gave I believe to be men of good faith.—With real regard,

"GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE."

Mr. Spencer sent me the following reply:

"38, QUEEN'S GARDENS, BAYSWATER, LONDON, W.,
"*November* 16, 1885.

"DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE,—You ask how I happen to know of certain defaulters that they were Secularists. I know them as such simply because their names came to me through you; for, as you may remember, you obtained for me, when the prospectus of the 'System of Philosophy' was issued, sundry subscribers.

"But for my own part, I would rather you did not refer to the matter. At any rate, if you do, do not do so by name. You will observe, if you turn

to the 'Study of Sociology,' where the matter is referred to, that I have spoken of the thing impersonally, and not in reference to myself. Though those who knew something of the matter might suspect it referred to my own case, yet there is no proof that it did so; and I should be sorry to see myself identified by name with the matter.—Truly yours, "HERBERT SPENCER."

But Mr. Spencer had identified Secularists as lacking ethical scrupulousness, and as I was the reputed founder of that form of Freethought known as Secularism, some notice became incumbent on my part. The brief article on "Intellectual Morality" in the *Present Day*, which I was editing in 1885, was my answer—the same as appears in my letter to Mr. Spencer, above quoted.

In 1879 the great recluse meditated going to America. As I was about to do the same myself, I volunteered to take a berth in the same vessel if I could be of any service to him on the voyage. He thought, however, that our sailing in the same ship might cause the constructive interviewers out there to confuse together the opinions we represented. Yet my friends would not know his, nor would his friends know mine. But I respected his scruples, lest his views should become colourably identified with my own. I had myself a preference for keeping distinct things separate, and I sailed in another ship and never called at his hotel but once,

when he was residing at the Falls of Niagara, which I thought was a curious spot (the noisiest in Canada) to choose for one whose need was quietude. He would take an entire flat in a hotel that he might be undisturbed at night. In Montreal, Mr. George Iles gave me the same splendid, spacious, secluded bedroom which he had assigned to Mr. Spencer when he was his host there. Professor von Denslow, who told me that he was the "champion non-sleeper of the United States," asked me to give a communication from him to Mr. Spencer. That was the reason of my single visit to him in Canada. At the farewell banquet given to Mr. Spencer in New York, famous speakers took part; but Henry Ward Beecher, in a speech shorter than any, excelled them all.

After his return to England, I had several communications from him on the subject of Co-operation. Like Mr. Gladstone, he usually made searching inquiries into the details of every question on which he wrote. One of his letters was as follows:—

"2, Lewes Crescent,
"Brighton,
"*January* 6, 1897.

"Dear Mr. Holyoake,—I should have called upon you before now had I not been so unwell. I have been kept indoors now for about three weeks. I write partly to say this and partly to enclose you something of interest as bearing upon my suggestion concerning piecework in co-operative combinations.

The experience described by Miss Davenport-Hill bears indirectly, if not directly, upon them, showing as it does the harmonising effect of piecework.—Truly yours, "HERBERT SPENCER."

Busied as he was with the recondite application of great principles, he had practical discernment of the possibilities of Co-operation, unthought of by those of us engaged in promoting co-partnership in the workshop. Trades unions were mostly against piecework as giving more active workers an advantage over the others. Mr. Spencer pointed out that in a co-partnership workshop the fruitfulness of piece work was an advantage to all. The piece-workers increase the output and profits of the society. The profits, being equally divided upon wages, the least bright and active members receive benefit from the piece-workers' industry.

Occasionally Mr. Spencer would come to my door and invite me to drive with him. Another time when he had visitors—Mrs. Sidney Webb and Prof. Masson, whom I wished to meet again—he would, if in the winter season, send me a card from "2, Lewes Crescent, Jan. 24, 1897.—I will send the carriage for you to-morrow (Sunday) at 12.40. With the hood up and the leather curtain down you will be quite warm.—H.S." He would occasionally send me grouse or pheasant for luncheon. Very pleasant were the amenities of philosophy.

The first work of Mr. Spencer's which attracted public attention was "Social Statics." Like Mr. Lewes' "Biography of Philosophy," it had a pristine charm which fascinated young thinkers. Both authors restated their works, but left behind their charm. Mr. Gladstone's first address to the electors of Newark contains the germs of his whole and entire career. "Social Statics" contains the element of that philosophy which gave Spencer the first place among thinkers of all times. Bishop Colenso found the book in the library of the builder of his Mission Houses in South Africa. Mr. Ryder, of Bradford, Yorkshire, procured it through me and took it out with him. It was a book of inspiration to him.

Ten years before "Social Statics" appeared I was concerned with others in publishing, in the "Oracle of Reason," a theory of Regular Gradation. Our motto, from Boitard, was an explicit statement of Evolution. Five out of seven of us were soon in prison, which shows that we did not succeed in making Evolution attractive. Intellectual photography was then in an infantine state. Our negatives lacked definition and our best impressions were indistinct. It was not until Darwin and Spencer arose that the art of developing the Evolutionary plates came to be understood.

Before the days of Spencer the world of scientific thought was mostly without form and void. The orthodox voyagers who set out to sea steered by a

HERBERT SPENCER.

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compass which always veered to a Jewish pole, and none who sailed with them knew where they were. Rival theologians constructed dogmatic charts, increasing the confusion and peril. Guided by the pole star of Evolution, Spencer sailed out alone on the ocean of Speculation and discovered a new empire of Law—founded without blood, or the suppression of liberty, or the waste of wealth—where any man may dwell without fear or shame.

The fascination of Mr. Spencer's pages to the pulpit-wearied inquirer was, that they took him straight to Nature. Mr. Spencer seemed to write with a magnifying pen which revealed objects unnoticed by other observers. His vision, like a telescope, descried sails at sea invisible to those on shore. His pages, if not poems, gleamed with the poetry of facts. His facts were the handmaids always at hand which explained his principle. His repetitions do not tire, but are fresh assurances to the reader that he is following a continuous argument. A pedestrian passing down a long street is glad to meet the recurrence of its name, that he may know he is still upon the same road. In Spencer's reasonings there are no byways left open, down which the sojourner may wander and lose himself. When cross-roads come in sight, finger-posts are set up telling him where they lead to, and directing him which to take. Mr. Spencer pursues a new thought, never loses sight of it,

and takes care the reader does not. No statement goes before without the proof following closely after.

When the reception was given to me at South Place Institute, London, in April, 1903, on my eighty-sixth birthday, he had been confined to his house from the previous August, yet he took trouble to write some words of personal regard to myself beyond all my expectation. To the end of his days—save when the weather was inclement—I used to walk up the hill to his door to inquire as to his health, and when I could not do so, Mr. Troughton would write me word. Mr. Spencer's last letter to me was in answer to one I had sent him on his birthday. It was so characteristic as to deserve quoting:

"Thanks for your congratulations; but I should have liked better your condolences on my longevity."

He wanted no twilight in his life. Like the sun in America, his wish was to disappear at once below the horizon—having amply given his share of light in his day.

Like Huxley, Mr. Spencer would not have slept well in Westminster Abbey. He needed no consolation in death; and if he had, there was no one who knew enough to give it to him. His conscience was his consolation. His one choice was that his friend Mr. John Morley—than whom none were fitter—should speak at his death the last words

over him. Mr. Morley being in Sicily, this could not be. The next in friendship and power of estimate—the Right Hon. Leonard Courtney—spoke in his stead, at the Hampstead Crematorium.

Mr. Spencer had a radium mind which gave forth, of its own spontaneity, light and heat. None who have died could more appropriately repeat the proud lines of Sir Edward Dyer:—

> "My mind to me a kingdom is;
> Such perfect joy therein I find
> As far exceeds all earthly bliss
> That God or Nature hath assign'd."

CHAPTER XXVI

SINGULAR CAREER OF MR. DISRAELI

I PREFER the picturesque name of Disraeli which he contrived out of the tribal designation of "D'Israeli." Had it been possible he would have transmuted Benjamin into a Gentile name. Disraeli is far preferable to the sickly title of Beaconsfield, by which association he sought to be taken as the Burke of the Tories, for which his genius was too thin.

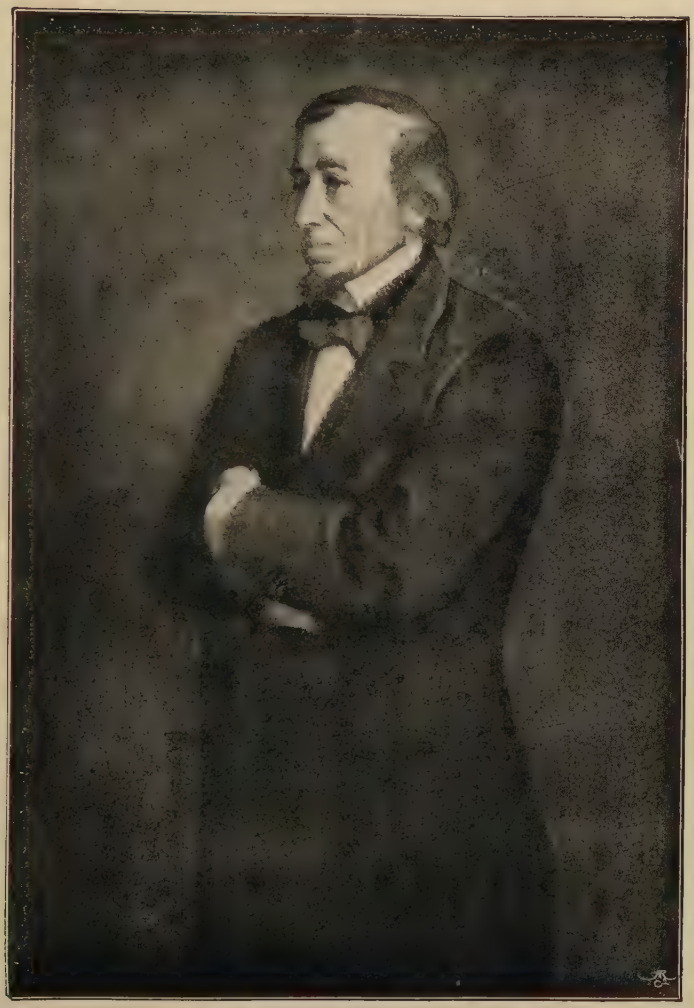
Disraeli is a fossilised bygone to this generation; though in the political arena he was the most glittering performer of his day. Men admired him as the Blondin of Parliament, who could keep his feet on a tight-rope at any elevation. Others looked upon him as a music-hall Sandow who could snap into two a thicker bar of bovine ignorance than any other athlete of the "country party." He was capable of serving any party, but preferred the party who could best serve him. He was an example how a man, conscious of power and

unhampered by scruples, could advance himself by strenuous devices of making himself necessary to those he served.

The showy waistcoat and dazzling jewellery in which he first presented himself to the House of Commons, betrayed the primitive taste of a Jew of the Minories, and foreshadowed that trinket statesmanship which captivated his party, who thought sober, honest principles dull and unentertaining.

Germany and England contemporaneously produced the two greatest adventurers of the century—Ferdinand Lassalle and Benjamin Disraeli. Both were Jews. Both had dark locks and faith in jewellery. Both were Sybarites in their pleasures; and personal ambition was the master passion of each. Both were consummate speakers. Both sought distinction in literature as a prelude to influence. Both professed devotion to the interests of the people by promulgating doctrines which would consolidate the power of the governing classes. Lassalle counselled war against Liberalism, Disraeli against the Whigs. Lassalle adjusted his views to Bismarck, as Disraeli did to Lord Derby. Both owed their fortunes to rich ladies of maturity. Both challenged adversaries to a duel, but Disraeli had the prudence to challenge Daniel O'Connell, who, he knew, was under a vow not to fight one, while Lassalle challenged Count Racowitza, and was killed.

It was a triumph without parallel to bring to pass that the proud aristocracy of England should accept a Jew for its master. Not approaching erect, like a human thing, Disraeli stealthily crept, lizard-like, through the crevices of Parliament, to the front of the nation, and with the sting that nature had given him he kept his enemies at bay. No estimate of him can explain him, which does not take into account his race. An alien in the nation, he believed himself to belong to the sole race that God has recognised. The Jew has an industrial daintiness which is an affront to mankind. He, as a rule, stands by while the Gentile puts his hand to labour. Isolated by Christian ostracism, the Jew tills no ground; he follows no handicraft — a Spinoza here and there excepted. The Jew, as a rule, lives by wit and thrift. He is of every nation, but of no nationality, save his own. He takes no perilous initiation; he leads no forlorn hope; he neither conspires for freedom, nor fights for it. He profits by it, and acquiesces in it; but generally gives you the impression that he will aid either despotism or liberty, as a matter of business—as many do who are not Jews. There are, nevertheless, men of noble qualities among them, and as a class they are as good or better than Christians would be had they been treated for nineteen centuries as badly as Jews have been.



BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

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Derision and persecution inspire a strong spirit with retaliation, and absolve him from scrupulous methods of compassing it. Two things the Jew pursues with an unappeasable passion—distinction and authority among believers, before whom his race has been compelled to cringe. An ancient people which subsists by subtlety and courage, has the heroic sense of high tradition, still looks forward to efface, not the indignity of days, but of centuries—which imparts to the Jew a lofty implacableness of aim, which never pauses in its purpose. How else came Mr. Disraeli by that form of assegai sentences, of which one thrust needed no repetition, and by that art which enabled him to climb on phrases to power?

A critic, who had taken pains to inform himself, brought charges against D'Israeli the Elder to the effect that he had taken passages of mark from the books of Continental sceptics and had incorporated them as his own. At the same time he denounced the authors, so as to disincline the reader to look into their pages for the D'Israelian plagiaries. In the novels of D'Israeli the Younger I have come upon passages which I have met with elsewhere in another form. As the reader knows, Disraeli delivered in Parliament, as his own, a fine passage from Thiers. So that when Daniel O'Connell described Disraeli as "the heir-at-law of the impenitent thief who died on the cross," he was nearer the truth than he knew,

for there was petty larceny in the Disraelian family.

When Sir James Stansfeld entered Parliament he had that moral distrust of Disraeli, which Lord Salisbury, in his Cranborne days, published a *Review* to warn his party against. Sir James (then Mr. Stansfeld) expressed a similar sentiment of distrust. Disraeli said to a friend in the lobby immediately after, "I will do for that educated mechanic." The vitriolic spite in the phrase was worthy of Vivian Grey. He kept his word, and caused Mr. Stansfeld's retirement from the Ministry. It was the nature of Disraeli to destroy any one who withstood him. At the same time he could be courteous and even kind to literary Chartists who, like Thomas Cooper and Ernest Jones, helped to frustrate the Whigs at the poll, which served the purpose of Tory ascendency, which was Disraeli's chance.

In Easter, 1872, I was in Manchester when Disraeli had the greatest pantomime day of his life—when he played the Oriental Potentate in the Pomona Gardens. All the real and imaginary Tory societies that could be got together from surrounding counties were paraded in procession before him. To each he made audacious little speeches, which astonished them and, when made known, caused jubilancy in the city.

The deputation from Chorley reminded him of Mr. Charley, member for Salford. He exclaimed,

"Chorley and Charley are good names!" When a Tory sick and burial society came up he said "he hoped they were doing a good business, and that their future would be prosperous!" When the night came for his speech, the Free Trade Hall was crowded. It was said that 2,000 persons paid a guinea each for their seats.

Mr. Callander, his host, had taken, at Mr. Disraeli's request, some brandy to the meeting. It was he who poured some into a glass of water. Mr. Disraeli, on tasting it, turned to him and said in an undertone, "There's nothing in it." This wounded the pride of his host, who took it as an imputation of stinginess on his part, and he filled the next glass plentifully. This was the beginning of the orator's trouble. For the first fifteen minutes he spoke in his customary resonant voice. Then husky, sibilant and explosive sentences were unmistakable. Apprehensive reporters, sitting below him, moved aside lest the orator should fall upon them. Suspicious gestures set in. An umbrella was laid near the edge of the platform, that the speaker might keep within the umbrella range. For this there was a good reason, as the speaker's habit of raising himself on his toes endangered his balance. All the meeting understood the case. The orator soon lost all sense of time. He, who knew so well how to suit performance to occasion, was incapable of stopping himself. The audience had come from distant parts. At nine o'clock they could hear the

railway bell, calling some to the trains. Ten o'clock came, when a larger portion of the audience was again perturbed by railway warnings. Disraeli was still speaking. Eleven o'clock came; the audience had further decreased then, but Disraeli was still declaiming hoarse sentences. It was a quarter-past eleven before his peroration came to an end; and many, who wished to have their guinea's worth of Parliamentary oratory, had to sleep in Manchester that night. Everybody knew the speaker would have ceased two hours earlier if he could. His host in the chair was much disquieted. His house was some distance from the city, and he had invited a large party of gentlemen to meet the great Conservative leader at supper, which had long been ready. Besides, he was afraid his guest would be unable to appear at it. Arriving at the house Disraeli asked his host to give him champagne—"a bottle of fizz" was the phrase he used—which he drank with zest, when, to the astonishment of his host, he joined the party and was at his best. He delighted every one with his sallies and his satire.

The next morning the city Conservatives were unwilling to speak of the protracted disappointment of the evening before. The Manchester papers gave good reports of the long speech, which contained some passages worthy of the speaker at any time—as when he compared the occupants of the front bench of the Government in the House of

Commons to so many extinct volcanoes. As some members of Her Majesty's Government were known friends of Mazzini and Garibaldi, the aptitude of the simile lives in political memory to this day. When the *Times* report arrived it was found that a considerable portion of the speech was devoted to the laudation of certain county families, which were not mentioned in the Manchester reports, and it was said that Disraeli had dictated his speech to Mr. Delane before he came down. But though he lost his voice and his memory, he never lost his wit, for he praised another set of families that came into his head.

Only in two instances has Mr. Disraeli been publicly charged with errors of vintage. In his time I heard members manifestly inebriated, address the House of Commons. On a memorable night Mr. Gladstone said Disraeli had access to sources of inspiration not open to Her Majesty's Ministers.

In the *Morning Star* there appeared next day a passage from Disraeli's speech, reported in vinous forms of sibilant expression. On that occasion Lord John Manners carried to him, from time to time during his oration, five glasses of brandy and water. I saw them brought in. There was the great table between the two front benches, which Mr. Disraeli said was fortunate, as he feared Mr. Gladstone might spring upon him. All the while it was not protection Mr. Disraeli wanted from the table,

but support, for he clutched it as he spoke. Sir John Macdonald, Premier of Canada, whom I had the honour to visit at Ottawa, not only resembled Disraeli in features, in the curl of his hair, but in his wit. One night Sir John made an extraordinary after-dinner speech, which had the flavour of a whole vintage in it. When Sir John found he had astonished the whole Dominion, he sent for the reporter, who appeared, trembling with apprehension. "Young man," said Sir John, "with your talent for reporting you have a great future before you. But take my advice—never report a speech in future when you are drunk."

Connoisseurs in art who went to the sale of his effects at Disraeli's Mayfair house were astonished at the Houndsditch quality of what they found there. Not a ray of taste was to be seen, not an article worth buying. The glamour of the Oriental had lain in phrases, not in art.

It was the Liberals who were the champions of the Jews, and who were the cause of their admission to Parliament. Mr. Disraeli must have had some generous memory of this. Mr. Bright would cross the floor of the House sometimes to confer with Disraeli. There must have been elements in his character in which Mr. Bright had confidence. It was believed to be owing to his respect for Mr. Bright's judgment that he took no part against America, when his party did all they could to destroy the cause of the Union in the great Anti-

Slavery War. It ought to be remembered to Disraeli's credit, that he made what John Stuart Mill called a "splendid concession" of household suffrage, although he took it back the next night, by the pernicious creation of the "compound householder." Still, Liberals owe it to him that household suffrage came to prevail when it did.

Disraeli's attacks upon Peel were dictated by the policy of self-advancement. He was capable of admiring Peel, but he admired himself more. Standing outside English questions and interests, he was able to treat them with an airiness which was a political relief. Yet he could see that our Colonies might become "millstones round the neck of the Empire" if we gave them too much of Downing Street, or maybe of Highbury.

To say Disraeli had no conscience would be to say more than any man has knowledge enough to say of another; but he certainly never gave the public the impression that he had one. He devised the scheme of giving the Queen the title of "Empress." Mr. Gladstone opposed it as dangerous to the dynasty, lowering its dignity to the level of Continental Emperorship, and taking from the Crown the master jewel of law, which has been more or less its security and glory for a thousand years.

Disraeli seemed to care for the Queen's favour—nothing for the integrity of the Crown. He

declared himself a Christian, and said in the presence of the Bishop of Oxford, with Voltairean mockery, that he was "on the side of the angels," and elsewhere described Judas as an accessory to the crucifixion before the act, and to that ignoble treachery all Christians were indebted for their salvation—an idea which could never have entered a Gentile mind. This was pure Voltairean scorn.

In his last illness he was reported to have had three different kinds of physicians—allopath, hydropath, homœopath; and had he chosen the spiritual ministration of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chief Rabbi, and Mr. Spurgeon, no one would have been surprised at his sardonic prudence.

I had admiration, though not respect, for his career. Yet I was for justice being done to him. When it was thought the Tories would prevent his accession to the Premiership, which was his right by service, I was one of those who cheered him in the lobby of the House of Commons, to show that adversaries of his politics were against his being defrauded of the dignity he had won.

How was it that Disraeli's standing at Court was never affected by what would be deemed seditious defamation of the Crown in any other person? When I mentioned in America the revolutionary license of his tongue in declaring the Queen to be

physically and morally incapable of governing, the statement was received with incredulity. The reporters who took down his Aylesbury speech containing the astounding words hesitated to transcribe them, and one asked permission to read the passage to Mr. Disraeli, who assented to its correctness, and the words appeared in the *Standard* and *Telegraph* of September 27, 1871. The *Times* and *Daily News* omitted the word "morally," deeming it incredible. But it was said. His words were: "We cannot conceal from ourselves that Her Majesty is physically and morally incapacitated from performing her duties." This meant that Her Majesty was imbecile—a brutal thing to suggest, considering family traditions.

At a Lord Mayor's banquet Mr. Disraeli gave an insulting and defamatory account of the Russian Royal Family and Government, and boasted, like an inebriate Jingo, of England's capacity to sustain three campaigns against that Power. As the Queen had a daughter-in-law a member of the Royal House of Russia, this wanton act of international offensiveness must have produced a sensation of shame and pain in the English Royal Family. I well remember the consternation and disapproval with which both speeches were regarded by the people. Whatever even Republicans may think of the theory of the Crown, they are against any personal outrage upon it. Yet Mr. Gladstone, who was always forward to sustain, by

graceful and discerning praise, the interest of the Royal Family, and procure them national grants, to which Mr. Disraeli could never have reconciled the nation, was simply endured by Her Majesty, while to Mr. Disraeli ostentatious preference was shown. It was said in explanation that Mr. Gladstone had no "small talk" with which Mr. Disraeli entertained his eminent hostess. It was not "small talk," it was Tory talk, which the Queen rewarded.

I am of Lord Acton's opinion, that Mr. Disraeli was morally insupportable, though otherwise astonishing. The pitiless resentment of "Vivian Grey" towards whoever stood in his way was the prevailing characteristic of the triumphant Jew. Like other men of professional ambition, he had the charm of engaging amity to those who were for the time being no longer impediment to him. When showing distress at a few drops of rain falling, news was brought Her Majesty that Mr. Gladstone had returned from a voyage and addressed a crowd on the beach. Disraeli exclaimed with pleasant gaiety, "What a wonderful man that Gladstone is. Had I returned from a voyage I should be glad to go to bed. Mr. Gladstone leaps on shore and makes a speech."

The moral of this singular career worth remembering, is that genius and versatility, animated by ambition without scruple, may attain distinction without principle. It can win national admiration,

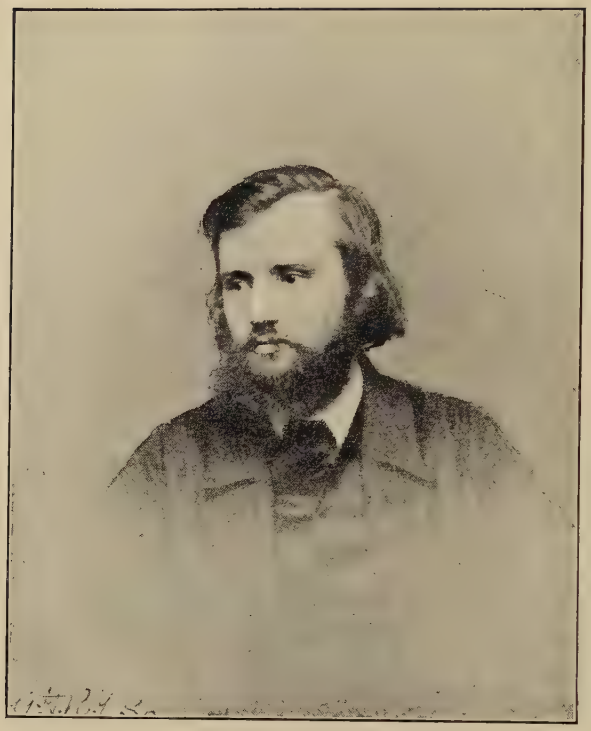
but not public affection. All it can accomplish is to leave behind a name of sinister renown. If we knew all, no doubt Lord Beaconsfield had, apart from the exigencies of ambition, personal qualities commanding esteem.

CHAPTER XXVII

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOSEPH COWEN

I

Political readers will long remember the name of Joseph Cowen, who won in a single night the reputation of a national orator. All at once he achieved that distinction in an assembly where few attain it. After a time he retired to his tent and never more emerged from it. The occasion of his first speech in Parliament was the introduction of the Bill for converting the Queen into an Empress. Queen was a wholesome monarchical name, which implied in England supremacy under the law; while Empress, alien to the genius of the political constitution, is a military title of sinister reputation, and implies a rank outside and above the law. Like Imperialism, it connotes military government, which, in the opinion of the free and prudent, is the most odious, dangerous, and costly of all governments.



Yours ever

Jos: Craven Junr

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Mr. Cowen entertained a strong repugnance to the word "Empress," which might become a prelude to Imperialism—as it has done.

Mr. Cowen's father, who preceded him in the House of Commons, was scrupulous in apparel, never affecting fashion, but keeping within its pale. His son was not only careless of fashion—he despised it. He employed local tailors, from neighbourliness, and was quite content with their craftsmanship. He never wore what is called a "top" hat, but a felt one, a better shape than what is known now as a "clerical" hat. It was thought he would abandon it when he entered Parliament, but he did not. He commonly left it in the cloak-room. He had no wish to be singular. His attire was as natural to him as his skin is to an Ethiopian. His headgear imperilled his candidature, when that came about.

He had been two years in Parliament before he addressed it. When he rose many members were standing impatient for division and crying "Divide! Divide!!" Mr. Cowen, being a small man, was not at once perceived, but his melodious, honest, and eager voice arrested attention, though his Northumbrian accent was unfamiliar to the House. It was as difficult to see the new orator as to see Curran in an Irish Court, or Thiers in the French Chamber. Disraeli glanced at him through his eyeglass, as though Mr. Cowen was one of Dean Swift's Lilliputians, and of one near him he asked

contemptuously, as a Northern burr broke upon his ear, "What language is the fellow talking?"

The speech had all the characteristics of an oration, historical, compact, and complete—though brief. In it he said three things never heard in Parliament before. One was that the "Divine right of kings perished on the scaffold with Charles I." Another was that "the superstition of royalty had never taken any deep hold of the English people." The third was to describe our august ally, the Emperor Napoleon III., as an "usurper." The impression the speech made upon the country was great. It so accorded with the popular sentiment that some persons paid for its appearance as an advertisement in the *Daily News* and other papers of the day, and the speaker acquired the reputation of an orator by a single speech. Mr. Disraeli's contemptuous reception of it did not prevent him, at a later date, from going up to Mr. Cowen, when he was standing alone by a fire, and paying him some compliment which made a lasting impression upon him. Mr. Disraeli had discernment to recognise genius when he saw it, and generosity enough to respect it when not directed against himself. If it were, he was implacable.

For years, as I well knew, Mr. Cowen spent more money for the advancement and vindication of Liberalism than any other English gentleman. He was the most generous friend of "forlorn hopes" England has known. How many combat-

ants has he aided; how many has he succoured; how many has he saved! If the other world be human like this, what crowds of grateful spirits of divers climes must have rushed to the threshold of heaven to welcome him as he entered.

Penniless, and his crew foodless, Garibaldi steered his vessel up the Tyne. Mr. Cowen was the only man in England Garibaldi then sought or confided in. Before he left the Tyne, Mr. Cowen, on behalf of subscribers (of whom many were pitmen), presented Garibaldi with a sword which cost £146. Goldwin Smith says, in his picturesque way, Henry III. had a "waxen heart." Mr. Cowen had an iron heart, steeled by noble purpose. He knew no fear, physical or mental. Not like my friend, George Henry Lewes, whose sense of intellectual right was so strong that he never saw consequences. Cowen did see them, and disregarded them; he "nothing knew to fear, and nothing feared to know"—neither ideas nor persons. How many men, not afraid of ideas, are much afraid of knowing those who have them? Unyielding to the high, how tender he was to the low!

Riding home with him one night, after a stormy meeting in Newcastle, when we were near to Stella House (he had not gone to reside in the Hall then) the horse suddenly stopped. Mr. Cowen got out to see what the obstruction was, and he found it was one of his own workmen lying drunk across the road. His master roused him and said: "Tom,

what a fool thou art! Had not the horse been the more sensible beast, thou hadst been killed." He would use these Scriptural pronouns in speaking to his men. The man could not stand, and Mr. Cowen and the coachman carried him to the door of another workman, called him up, and bade him let Tom lie in his house till morning. Then we drove on.

Another time a workman came to Mr. Cowen for an advance of thirty shillings. Being asked what he wanted the money for, the man answered: "To get drunk, sir; I have not been drunk for six weeks." "Thou knowest," said Mr. Cowen, "I never take any drink, because I think the example good for thee. Thou will go to Gateshead Fair, get locked up, and I shall have to bail thee out. There is the money; but take my advice, get drunk at home, and thy wife will take care of thee." How many employers possess workmen having that confidence in them to put such a question as this workman did, without fear of losing their situation? No workman lied, or had need to lie, to Mr. Cowen. He had the tolerance and tenderness of a god.

When I was ill in his house in Essex Street, Strand, he would come up at night and tell me of his affairs, as he did in his youth. He had for some time been giving his support to the Conservative side. I said to him, "Disraeli is dead. Do you not see that you may take his place if you will? It is open. His party has no successor among them.

He had race, religion, and want of fortune against him. You have none of these disadvantages against you. You are rich, and you can speak as Disraeli never could. He had neither the tone nor the fire of conscience—you have both. You have the ear of the House, and the personal confidence of the country, as he never had. In his place you would fill the ear of the world." He thought for a time on what I said to him; then his answer was: "There is one difficulty—I am not a Tory."

I saw he was leaving the side of Liberalism and that he would inevitably do Conservative work, and I was wishful that he should have the credit of it. He was under a master passion which carried him he knew not whither.

It was my knowledge of Mr. Cowen, long before that night, that made me oft say that a Tyneside man had more humility and more pride than God had vouchsafed to any other people of the English race. Until middle life Mr. Cowen was as his father, immovable in principle; afterwards he was as his mother in implacableness. That is the explanation of his career.

The "passion" referred to—never avowed and never obtruded, but which "neither slumbered nor slept"—was ambition. It might be called Paramountcy—that dangerous war-engendering word of Imperialism—which only the arrogant pronounce, and only the subjugated submit to.

The Cowen family had no past but that of

industry, and in Mr. Cowen's youth the "slings and arrows of outrageous" Toryism, shafts of arrogance, insolence, and contempt, flew about him. He inherited from his mother a proud and indomitable spirit, and resolved to create a Liberal force which should withstand all that—and he did. Then, when he came to be, as he thought, flouted by those whom he had served (the common experience of the noblest men), he at length resented and turned against himself. He had reached the heights where he had been awarded an imperishable place, and then descended in resentment to mingle and be lost in the ignominious faction whom he had defeated and despised. Those who had enraged him were not, as we shall see, worth his resentment.

It was not for "a handful of silver" he left us—for he had plenty—nor for "a ribbon to stick in his coat," for he would not wear one if offered a basketful. It was just indignation, stronger than self-respect.

Not all at once did the desire of control assume this form. By his natural nobility of nature he inclined to the view that all the supremacy inherent in man is that of superior capacity, to which all men yield spontaneous allegiance.

Some time elapsed before the bent of his mind became apparent. Possibly it was not known to himself.

When a young man, he promoted and maintained

two or three journals, in which he also wrote himself, without suggesting to others the passion for journalism by which he was possessed. Some years later, when proofs of one of his speeches which a reporter had taken down, and Mr. Cowen had himself corrected, passed through my hands, I was struck with the dexterity with which he put a word of fire into a tame sentence, infused colour into a pale-faced expression, and established a pulse in an anæmic one. It was clear that he had the genius of speech in him and was ambitious of distinction in it.

Mr. Cowen's father was a tall, handsome man of the Saxon type, which goes steadily forward and never turns back. He always described himself as a follower of Lord Durham, and was out on the Newcastle Town Moor in 1819, at great meetings in support of the Durham principles. His mother was quite different in person, both in stature and appearance ; somewhat of the Spanish type—dark, and mentally capable of impassable resolution. Her son, Joseph, with whom we are here concerned, had dark, luminous eyes which were the admiration of London drawing-rooms—when he could be got to enter them. His eldest sister, Mrs. Mary Carr, was as tall as her father, with the complexion of her mother. I used to compare her to Judith, the splendid Jewess who slew Holofernes. She used to say her brother Joseph had her mother's spirit, and that a "Cowen never changed." Her brother never changed in his purpose of ascendency, but

when inspired by resentment he could change his party to attain his end—as I have seen done in the House of Commons many times in my day. This is why I have said that in the early part of Mr. Cowen's life he was his father—placid but purposeful. In the second half he was his mother—resentful and implacable when affronted by non-compliance where he expected and desired concurrence. But I have known many excellent men who did not take dissent from their opinions in good part.

How fearless Mr. Cowen was, was shown in his conduct when a dangerous outbreak of cholera occurred in Newcastle. People were dying in every street and lane, but he went out from Blaydon every morning at the usual time, and walked through the infected streets and passages into Newcastle, to his offices on the quay, being met on his way by persons in distress, from death in their houses, who knew they were sure of sympathy and assistance from him. The courage of his unfailing appearance in his ordinary way saved many from depression which might have proved fatal to them. When a wandering guest fell ill at his home, Stella House, Blaydon, he was sure of continued hospitality until his recovery. Mr. Cowen's voice of sympathy and condolence was the tenderest I ever heard from human lips.

A poor man, who lived a good deal upon the moors, was charged with shooting a doctor, and would have been hanged but for Mr. Cowen de-

fending him by legal aid. He thought the police had apprehended him because he was the most likely, in their opinion, to be guilty. He was poor, friendless, and often houseless. The man did not seem quite right in his mind. After his acquittal, Mr. Cowen took him into his employ, and made him his gardener. The garden was remote and solitary. I often passed my mornings in it, not without some personal misgiving. Mr. Cowen eventually enabled the man to emigrate to America, where a little eccentricity of demeanour does not count.

In the political estrangements of Mr. Cowen, it must be owned he had provocations. A party of social propagandists came to Newcastle, whom he entertained, as they had never been entertained before, at a cost of hundreds of pounds, and was at great expense to give publicity to their objects. They left him to defray some bills they had the means of paying. Years later, when they came again into the district, he did no more for them in the former way. He had conceived a distrust of them. Another time he was asked by persons whom he was willing to aid, to buy some premises for them, as they would be prejudiced at the auction if they appeared in person. Mr. Cowen bought the property for £5,000. They changed their minds when it was bought, and left Mr. Cowen, who did not want it, with it upon his hands. He did not resent it, as he might have done, but it was an act of

meanness which would have revolted the heart of an archangel of human susceptibility.

When the British Association first came to Newcastle, Mr. Cowen spent more than £500 in giving publicity to their proceedings. He brought a railway carriage full of writers and reporters from London, that the proceedings of every section should be made known to the public. He had personal notices written of all the principal men of science who came there, and when he asked for admission of his reporters, he was charged £19 for their tickets. As I was one of those engaged in the arrangements, I shared his indignation at this scientific greed and ingratitude. In all the history of the British Association, before and since, it never met with the enthusiasm, the liberality and publicity the *Newcastle Chronicle* accorded it.

In the days of the great Italian struggle, little shoals of exiles found their way to England. Learning where the great friend of Garibaldi dwelt, they found their way to Newcastle, and many were directed there from different parts of England. Many times he was sent for to the railway station, where a number of destitute exiles had arrived. He relieved their immediate wants and had them provided for at various lodgings, until they were able to get some situation elsewhere. I think Mr. Cowen began to tire of this, as he thought exiles were sometimes sent to him by persons who ought to have taken part of the

responsibility themselves, but who seemed to consider that his was the purse of the Continent.

Once when Mr. Cowen attended a political conference in Leeds, he received as he entered the room marked attention, as he was known to be the leader of the Liberal forces of Durham and Northumberland. But Mr. W. E. Forster, who was present, took no notice of him, though Mr. Cowen had rendered him great political service. When Mr. Bright saw Mr. Cowen he cordially greeted him. Immediately Mr. Forster, seeing this, stepped up also and offered him compliments, which Mr. Cowen received very coldly without returning them, and passed away to his seat. Mr. Cowen's impression was that as Mr. Forster had suffered him to pass by without recognition, he did not want to know him before that assembly; but when Mr. Forster saw Mr. Bright's welcome of his friend, he was willing to know him. Mr. Forster, as I had reason to know afterwards, was capable of such an action, where recognition stood in the way of his interests,[1] but it was not so on this occasion. Mr. Forster was short-sighted, and simply did not see Mr. Cowen when he first passed him. But it happened that he did see him when Mr. Bright stepped forward to speak to him, and there was no slight of Mr. Cowen intended. Yet from that hour Mr. Cowen entertained a contempt for Mr. Forster,

[1] But only where ambition was stronger than his habitual sense of honour. See chapter lxxix, "Sixty Years."

and would neither meet him nor speak to him. One day Mr. Cowen and I were at a railway station, where Mr. Forster appeared in his volunteer uniform. We had to wait some time for the train. Mr. Cowen asked me to walk with him as far as we could from where Mr. Forster stood, that we should not pass near him. Some years later, at the House of Commons, Mr. Forster asked Mr. Cowen to walk with him in the Green Park, as he wished to speak with him. After two hours Mr. Cowen returned reconciled. He never told me the cause of it, which he should have done, as I had taken his part in the long years of resentment. I relate the incident as showing how personal misconception produces political estrangement in persons and parties alike.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOSEPH COWEN

II

But the act which most wounded him occurred at the Elswick works of Lord Armstrong. Mr. Cowen was returning one day in his carriage at a time of political excitement. Some of the crowd threw mud upon his coach, and, if I remember rightly, broke the windows. Just before, when the workmen were on strike, they went to Mr. Cowen—as all workmen in difficulties did. He found they did not know their own case, nor how to put it. He employed legal aid to look into the whole matter and make a statement of it. Mr. Cowen became their negotiator, and obtained a decision in their favour. The whole expense he incurred on their behalf was £150. Services of this kind, which had been oft rendered, should have saved him from public contumely at their hands.

At that time Mr. Cowen was giving the support of his paper against Liberalism, which he had so

long defended and commended, which was an incentive to the outrage. Still, the sense of gratitude for the known services rendered to workers, which he continued irrespective of his change of opinion, should have saved him from all personal disrespect.

The subjection of the Liberals in Newcastle in the days of his early career, and the arrogant defamation with which it was assailed, were what determined him to create a defiant power in its self-defence.

He bought the *Newcastle Chronicle*, an old Whig paper. He published it in Grey Street, afterwards in St. Nicholas' Buildings, and then in Stephenson Place, on premises now known as the *Chronicle* Buildings. The printing machines at first cost £250 each, then £450. The *Chronicle* Buildings were purchased for £6,000, and a similar sum was expended in adapting them for their new purposes. The site is the finest in Newcastle. The printing machines now cost £6,000 to £7,000. Each machine is provided in duplicate, so that if one side of the press-room broke down, the other side could be instantly set in motion. Once I made a short speech in the town, which was reported, set up, cast, and an edition of the paper containing the speech was on sale within little more than twenty minutes. The office above the great press-room, in which the public transact business with the paper, is the costliest, handsomest, Grecian interior I

know of connected with any newspaper buildings. What perseverance and confidence must have animated Mr. Cowen in the enterprise, is shown in the fact that he had sunk £40,000 in it before it began to pay.[1] He made the *Chronicle*, as he intended to make it, the leading political power in Durham and Northumberland. The leaders he wrote in its columns after he left Parliament were unequalled in all the press of England for vividness, eloquence, and variety of thought. There could be no greater proof of the dominancy of Mr. Cowen's mind, than his establishment and devotion to the *Chronicle*.

I had been a party several years to negotiating with candidates to stand for Newcastle, whose public expenses Mr. Cowen paid. I obtained the consent of the Liberals of York, that Mr. Layard, whom they considered pledged to them, should become a candidate at Newcastle. "Why should you?" I said one day to Mr. Cowen, "incur these repeated costs for the candidature of others, when you can command a seat in your own family for three generations. If you will not be a candidate, why should not your father?" The conversation ended by his agreeing that I might persuade his father to go to Parliament if

[1] Unwilling that his father or banker should surmise how much he was exhausting his personal resources, he directed me at one time to borrow £500 or £1,000 in London. It was advanced by a personal friend.

I could. It was in vain that I assured him that the seat was open to him, but he did not believe, nor wish to believe it. I several times saw his father at Stella Hall. He thought himself too old. I told him there were fifty gentlemen in the House of Commons, willing to become Prime Minister, and some of them waiting for the appointment, who were fifteen years older than he, and would be disappointed did not the chance come to them. He found this true when he at length entered the House. His objection was that he could not ask his neighbours, among whom he had lived all his days, to elect him. "Suppose they signed an undertaking to vote for you in case you came forward?" That he consented to consider. A requisition signed by 2,178 electors was sent to him. Then another difficulty arose. His son said: "I cannot support my father in the *Chronicle*."[1] Then I said, "Let me edit it during the election, and no line shall appear commending your father to the electors. But whatever pretensions his adversaries put forth, we will examine." My proposal was agreed to. It was alleged by the rival candidate, that the requisition was signed out of courtesy to a popular towns-

[1] This diffidence of appearing as the advocate of his father was carried to excess. When a local paper made remarks upon his father's knighthood, which ought to have been resented, I set out late one night to Darlington, arriving a little before midnight, and wrote a vindicatory notice, which, by the friendship of Mr. H. K. Spark, was inserted in the *Darlington Times* that night. It was quoted afterwards in the *Newcastle Chronicle*.

man, and did not mean that those who signed it had pledged their votes. To this I answered that when Chambers appeared on the Thames, bookmakers said, "Chambers is a Newcastle man, who never sells the honour of his town, but will win if he can." Is it to be true that a Newcastle elector would not only give his promise, but write it, without intending to keep it? Will he be true on the Thames and false on the Tyne? All the requisitionists save a few, whom sickness or misadventure kept from the poll, voted for Joseph Cowen, senior, who was elected by a large majority.

The great services to the town of the new member by his arduous chairmanship of the Tyne Commission, would have insured his election, but his majority was no doubt increased by the popularity of his son. This did not escape the comment of local politicians, and Mr. Lowthian Bell said, "How is it, Mr. Cowen, that everybody votes for your father for your sake?" "I suppose it is," was the answer, "that while you have been sitting on winter nights with your feet on the rug by the fireside, I have been addressing pitmen's meetings in colliery villages, and finding my way home late at night in rain and blast; and it happens that they are grateful for it." This was the only time I knew Mr. Cowen to make a self-assertive reply.

When Mr. Cowen's father was in the field, and Mr. Beaumont began his canvass, in one street he

met with forty-nine refusals to vote for him. "Why will you not vote for me?" he asked. "We are going to vote for Mr. Coon, now," as his name was pronounced at the Tyneside. "But you have two votes," Mr. Beaumont said; "you can give me one." "No! if we had twenty votes we should give them all to Mr. Coon. When Chambers and Clasper make a £100 match for the honour of the Tyne, and we cannot make up the money, Mr. Coon always makes it up for us, and when we win and go to repay him, he gives it to us." This was not a patriotic reason to give for voting for "Mr. Coon," but it showed gratitude, as well as Mr. Cowen's influence, and what a hold his kindness to the people had given him upon their affection. Thus they voted for the father from regard for the son. For in those days the son had no idea of Parliament himself, and votes were not in his thoughts.

Nothing could be more open or gentlemanly than Mr. Cowen in the contests to which he was a party. Mr. Somerset Beaumont was member for Newcastle, and he impressed Mr. Gladstone with a high sense of his capacity in Parliament. One morning, as Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Cowen came into Newcastle in the same train, Mr. Cowen said to him, "You know, Mr. Beaumont, we all like you personally, but you do not go far enough for us. We want a more Radical representative for Newcastle. We shall prevent your election next time if we can, but

only if we have a more advanced candidate. Otherwise we will countenance no opposition to you."

Who could foresee the day would come when—save Mr. Cowen—the noblest candidate Newcastle ever had (Mr. John Morley) would be opposed by Mr. Cowen in the interests of Toryism? Or that, after withstanding at the hustings when he became a candidate, and defeating furious collusions between Tories, Conservatives, Moderates, publicans, and all who had vicious interests to serve or spite to gratify, Mr. Cowen himself would one day be found aiding or abetting the same parties by taking their side against Liberalism.

When in Parliament, his father had misgivings touching Mr. Gladstone, who, he thought, passed him at times without recognition. He had conducted Mr. Gladstone down the Tyne in triumph, and his son had assembled 200,000 persons on the Moor, who were addressed from twenty platforms in support of Mr. Gladstone, and provided reporters and published all the speeches. The cost of this was one of a hundred contributions he made in the interest of Liberalism. I used to explain that Mr. Gladstone, intent upon great questions (he was always intent upon something) he had to explain to the House—he, self-absorbed, would pass by his friends without seeing them, expecting, as he had a right to expect, that devotion to the great trust of the State would be taken to palliate his seeming inattention to friends.

But Mr. Gladstone was not unmindful of the service rendered to him at Newcastle, and when, some time later—no one else thinking of it—I made representations, through Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Stansfeld—without knowledge of Mr. Cowen or his son—I was instructed to inform Mr. Cowen, sen., that a baronetcy would be placed at his acceptance. Mr. Cowen, jun., objected entirely on his own part. His father therefore only accepted a knighthood, which Her Majesty, from consideration of his years, kindly ordered to be gazetted, obviating his attendance at Court. All the same, it was Mr. Gladstone's intention to recognise the services of the son as well as the father.

Honours were not much accessible in those days, especially in uncourtly quarters. My representation, in suggesting what I did, was, that as personal distinction was conferred upon persons who had made £100,000, something was due to one who may be said to have given that sum to the public.[1] His

[1] Sir Joseph Cowen was appointed by Act of Parliament, 1850, chairman for life of the Tyne Improvement Commission, an unpaid office. There was then only six feet of water on the bar at low water spring tides, and twenty-one at high water. In 1870 there was a depth of twenty feet at low water, and thirty-five at high water; the deepening extending nine miles from the bar. In twenty years ending 1870 there had been raised thirty-eight million tons. In 1870 the tonnage of the Tyne had risen from two and a half millions to more than four and a half millions, exceeding by one million that of the Thames. In 1865 there entered the Tyne port for refuge 132 vessels. In 1870 558 vessels fled there from the storms of the North Sea.

chairmanship of the Tyne Commission extended over a period of twenty-four years, during which the Tyne was converted from a creek into a navigable river. The time and assiduity thus devoted to the service of navigation and trade would have added £100,000 to his fortune. That his knighthood might be justified in the eyes of his neighbours and his own, I supplied the facts which authorised it to Mr. Walker, who was then editor of the *Daily News*, and which appeared in his leader columns. My reason for taking the step I did was a sense of duty to the public, who should see as far as possible that those who rendered service should find acknowledgment of it. I was of Coleridge's opinion :—

> "It seems a message from the world of spirits,
> When any man obtains that which he merits,
> Or any merit that which he obtains."

On the death of the father, his son, Mr. Joseph Cowen, was elected in his place, as a member for Newcastle; and Parliament being dissolved shortly after, he was again elected by a triumphant majority.

Mr. Cowen had made more speeches at the Tyneside than any other resident ever did. But the town was unconscious of their merit. They were addressed mostly to working men, and to persons whom it was not thought necessary to report or take into account the speaker. When he

became a candidate all classes of persons were among the auditors. The town was astonished at the relevance and fire of his orations. I mention this circumstance to show how a man can be famous in one half of the town and not known in the other.

After his retirement from Parliament and platform he occasionally delivered orations on persons, at inaugurations, which surpassed all I have ever read of the kind, for aptness of phrase, variety of thought and vivid portraiture, which ought to be added to the record of English oratory.

It was not reasonable in him, after the change in his political views, to expect that his townsmen should adopt the new opinions he had begun to countenance, and which he had himself taught them to distrust. But this is what strong leaders do who suffer the pride of power to become imperious. A just ambition, which is patient, and will work for results, can as a rule succeed. It is ambition which is impetuous, and will not wait longer, which lapses into reaction from disappointment. With all his virtues, Mr. Cowen was impetuous. To desert a party because of the folly or excesses of portions of its members, would oblige a man to change his profession in politics and his creed in religion every twelve months.

In his earlier career it may be imagined that Mr. Cowen derived his principles from generous prejudices, in later days from indignant impulses.

Many persons hold by inheritance right principles into whose foundation they have never inquired. Investigation, if they entered upon it, would confirm their convictions, but not resting on examination, their nobler prepossessions may be displaced by passion. We all know in religion how vehemently adherents will vindicate questions of which they know only one side, and hold it to be sinful to inquire into the other. Such persons, when right, are unstable and liable to variableness under the glamour of unknown ideas. Mr. Cowen was well informed on Liberal principles and never took to Conservative views, and, save in antagonism, did not assist them.

The bent of his mind to paramountcy in ideas was shown in the extraordinary requirements he made, that Mr. Morley should disown the political friends who had invited him to Newcastle, and become the candidate of the *Chronicle*. Mr. Morley answered, "I will not do it, and that is flat." Then Mr. Cowen resolved that this refusal should cost him his seat, and ultimately he effected it, not from Conservative resentment, but from pride. Had Mr. Morley consented to this condition he would have remained member for Newcastle, supported with all the force of Mr. Cowen's splendid advocacy. Mr. Cowen always remained true to Home Rule for Ireland. But, as we have seen done in the case of others in Parliament, he assailed every one who held it not under his inspiration.

Mr. Cowen was naturally noble, and resentment never made him mean, but like any one to whom compliance with his essential convictions is a necessity of his mind, he was apt to regard non-concurring persons as better out of the way. He would not destroy them, but they were no longer objects of his solicitude.

Everybody who did not take this into account failed to understand Mr. Cowen's career. He sought nothing for himself—he refused everything offered to him, office included, and accepted no overture made to him. Whatever opinion he held, to whatever party he allied himself, he might, if he wished, have remained member for Newcastle all his life. He wanted no place in Parliament; all he wanted was his own way—compliance with his own opinions. He had no ambition in the ordinary sense—he had no sinister end to serve, and it was always his preference to promote liberty and progress, generosity and good faith in public affairs.

Conforming to no conventionality, never entering society, nor accepting any invitation to do it, in his attention to his collieries, his ships, his fire-brick works, manufactory, newspaper and public meetings, he was occupied from early morning until late at night, without rest and without hurry. He was never exhausted and was never still. One evening he lay down on his sofa, fell asleep, and none around him knew that he was dead.

It would astonish the reader—were they all nar-

rated—the considerable undertakings which he conducted and carried through at the same time. He was a great man of business, and had the management of heaven been consigned to him as a pleasure resort, he would have made it pay eventually. He was an apostle, not an apostate, but his apostleship was of his own ideas. He was no apostate of his party. Had he been in the celestial world when Lucifer revolted, Mr. Cowen might have aided Satan, from motives of resentment at being denied, by certain dissentient cherubim, ascendency himself. But he would never have joined the fallen angels, nor, as we have seen other politicians do, officially engage in their work, or identify himself with them.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PERIL OF SCRUPLES

An outlaw is seldom considered a pleasant person, and naturally occupies a dubious place in public estimation. His position is worse than that of an exile, who, if once allowed to return, is reinstated in society, but the outlaw of opinion is never pardoned. Where justice turns upon the hinge of the oath, there is no redress for him who has scruples as to taking it. He who has scruples exposes himself to unpleasant comments. He is counted a sort of fastidious crank. All the while it is known that a man without scruples is a knave, who respects nothing save his own interests, and will do anything likely to promote them—even to the commission of robbery or murder—as police-courts disclose. To be scrupulous is to be solicitous as to the rightfulness of a thing proposed to be done. It is plainly the interest of society to encourage those who act upon honest scruples. Scruples may be trivial or unfounded—they may be open to objection on

that account. Nevertheless, the habit of being scrupulous is to be tolerated as conducive to integrity, without which society would be insufferable. It is therefore not desirable that perils should accompany scrupulousness, as I have often seen them do.

The obligatory oath has always been detrimental to public morality. When one oath was imposed on all persons, it was repugnant to their individual sense of truth in many cases, and men, to protect their interests, began to tamper with veracity, and invent new meanings of the terms of the oath. Thus the fortunate fastidiousness of truth is broken down.

The Christian oath is an ecclesiastical device, framed in the interest of the Church, to enforce, under penalty, the recognition and perpetuation of its tenets. He who takes the oath professes to believe that if he breaks it "God will blast his soul in hell for ever." This is the old brutal, terrifying form in which the consequence was expressed. It is softened now, to suit the secular humanity of the age, to a statement that God will hold the oath-taker responsible for its fulfilment. But God's method of holding any one responsible, is by sentencing him to "outer darkness," where there will be "wailing and gnashing of teeth." A very unpleasant region to dwell in. There is no good ground to suppose that such a sentence for such an offence would be passed, but the intimidation is

retained. Mr. Cluer, a London magistrate, said lately that "if the fate of Ananias befel all who swore falsely in his court, the floor would be strewn with dead bodies." But the courts fall back upon the pristine meaning of the oath. The magistrate asks a little child, tendered as a witness, "whether she knows, if she does not tell the truth, where she will go to?" and whether she "has never heard of a place called hell or of its keeper, the devil?" If not, he publicly deplores the neglect of the child's education, and declares her to be incapable of telling the truth. Every one who took the oath, whether rich or poor, a philosopher or a fool, each professed to believe that the Great God of all the worlds, notwithstanding the infinite business He has on hand, was personally present in any dingy court when the oath-taker calls upon Him "to witness" that he speaks the truth, and if not, God, who never forgets, burdens His celestial memory with that fact, with a view to eternal retaliation, in case the oath is false. He who takes the oath and does not believe this, lies to begin with, whatever may be the character of his testimony.

To take the oath in any other sense than that in which it is administered to you, is to deceive the court.

> "He who imposes the oath, makes it.
> Not he, who for convenience takes it."

The reliance on the part of those who impose the

oath, is that he who takes it believes the terms of it. If the taker takes it in a private sense of his own, the virtue has gone out of the oath, and the court is deceived. If the Unitarian takes the oath, not believing in an avenging God, he creates a new oath for himself, in which the compelling power of an eternal terror is absent. He, therefore, does not take the oath of the court, but another of his own invention ; and if he made known to the court what he was doing, the court would not receive his testimony. Philosophers, who have less belief than Unitarians, take the oath. But in the eye of morality it is not less discreditable—perhaps more so, for the philosopher stands for absolute truth, while the Unitarian stands only for theological truth.

The trouble was that he who refuses to take the oath of the court, in the sense of the court, became an outlaw, and that was a serious thing. I was myself an outlaw, until I was fifty-two years of age, without the power of obtaining redress where I was wronged, or of punishing fraud or theft from which I suffered, or of protecting the life and property of others, where my evidence was required. My ambition was to be a barrister, but legal friends assured me that the law turned upon the hinge of oath-taking, and that the path of the Bar would to me be a path of lying. It happens that I have never taken an oath. When I found that my belief did not coincide with that implied by the oath, I felt precluded from taking it.

This reluctance brought me peril. When the question of a Parliamentary oath in Lord Randolph Churchill's days raged, a new doctrine was set up among some partisans of Freethought—that an Atheist might take the oath. That meant there was no longer any distinction in terms, or any meaning in principle. If an Atheist may, for the sake of some advantage before him, make a Christian profession, there is no reason why a Christian should not make an Atheistical profession if it answered his purpose. The apostles made quite a mistake by incurring martyrdom for conscience sake. Bruno, Servitus, and Tyndale need not have gone to the stake, had they only understood that the way to advance the truth was to abandon it, instead of standing to it. If a man is not to stand by the truth when the consequences are against him, there is an end of truth as a principle. It is no longer a duty to suffer for it and maintain it.

It seemed to me that the friends of reason, who rejected theological tenets, should be as scrupulous as to the truth as partisans of superstition have often proved themselves to be, and that the Atheist should have as clear a sense of intellectual honour as the Quaker, the Catholic, or the Jew, who all suffered rather than take an oath contrary to their sense of truth. This was regarded as a reflection upon some excellent colleagues of mine, who thought it fatuity to

allow an oath to stand in their way, and frustrate their career.

It was brought against me that there were circumstances under which I should be as little scrupulous as other people. Major Bell, who had incurred great peril in India for the sake of honour, put a question to me in the *Daily News* purporting that, "Had I married before 1837 I should not have hesitated at twice invoking the Trinity as the Church service required?" And if I had done so, "should I not have perpetrated a piece of hypocrisy?" There is an immoral maxim that "All things are fair in love and war," and it is probable that I should not have hesitated to perpetrate that "piece of hypocrisy," as it would have been the lesser of two evils, but it would not, therefore, cease to be an evil. If under any compulsion of love or war I was induced to perpetrate "a piece of hypocrisy," it would never occur to me to go about saying it was not hypocrisy. I dislike law, custom, or persons who force me to do what I know to be wrong, but no person could do his worst against me, until he prevailed upon me to go about saying it was right.

Dr. Moncure Conway asked whether, if his life was in danger in China, and I could save it by the Chinese oath of breaking a saucer, I would not do it? Certainly I would, to save Dr. Conway, if the Confucians would permit me, but I should not the

less deceive them by pretending to have sworn before them in the Chinese sense. But I should regret the necessity, since in no country would I willingly treat truth as a superstition. By taking the "saucer" oath, I should obtain in Chinese eyes a validity for my word not really belonging to it. However I might excuse the act, it would still be deceit, nor ought it to be called by any other name. There is no virtuous vagueness in unveracity, and he who in peril uses it would not be justified in carrying it into common life, where Lord Bacon has warned us, "Truth is so useful, that we should make public note of any departure from that excellent habit." Major Evans Bell further argued that because the Prince of Wales may sign himself my "obedient, humble servant," while not feeling himself bound to act so, the terms of the oath may be likewise regarded as a form of words merely. Yet all "forms" which are unreal are unwise and hurtful. But the superscription of the Prince is known to be but a false form, and accepted as such, while the oath is a profession of faith. If the Prince went into a public court and swore in the name of God that he really was my "obedient, humble servant," I should think him a very shabby Prince if the solemnity went for nothing. As I have known Major Bell expose himself to what his friends believed to be fatal peril, from a noble sense of self-imposed duty, to which neither oath, nor contract, nor any conventional superscription called

him, I no more imagine him than I did Dr. Conway, to really mean what their arguments seemed to imply.

Some are for the spirit more than the form. I was for both, and I regard all legislation as immoral which divorces them. Referring to these letters, the *Daily News* (December 23, 1881) regarded them as "marked by rectitude of moral judgment, which is recognised by those who most deplore what they think is theological aberration. Some such testimony as he gives was almost needed to efface the impression which recent events in and out of the House of Commons have made, that moral indifferentism is of necessity associated with religious negation." I was glad of those words at a time when I was fiercely assailed for saying what I did, in the midst of the Parliamentary contest which then occupied the attention of the country. My object was to assist the right in the contest, and to defend the Free Thought cause. Had I not spoken then, it would have been in vain to speak afterward. To be silent about principle in the hour of its application would have been fatal to its influence and repute, so far as it might be represented by me.

As far as in my power lay, I left no uncertainty in the mind of Parliament as to what was wanted, in lieu of the oath. It was simply a "promise of honour," to declare the truth in matters of testimony, and observe good faith in contracts. One

of my petitions to the House of Commons ran thus :—

"Your petitioner is a person who never took an oath, as it implied theological convictions he did not hold. He, however, has seen persons of far greater knowledge than he possesses, of high social position and authority, and whose example men look up to, take the oath, though it was known to all that they held no belief corresponding thereunto—the opprobrium and outlawry attending the refusal of the oath being more than they would incur. This has led to a practice of public prevarication, that of persons saying a thing and not meaning it, or meaning something else. Nowhere is this example more disastrous than in your High Assembly, where anything said is conspicuous and its example influential on the conduct of others."

Another petition so interested Professor J. E. Thorold Rogers, M.P. (who had held holy orders), that he had copies made of it, and sent one with a letter to each morning paper, saying he regarded it as expressing the "quintessence of political morality." The petition set forth :—

"That it is at all times important that public declarations should be so expressed that any one making them shall be able to say what he means, and mean what he says. In these days, when popular instruction is being advanced by national schools, it is yet more desirable that no public

declaration should be exacted, the terms of which are unmeaning or untrue to those who make it, inasmuch as such declaration deteriorates the wholesome habit of national veracity, and is of the nature of a fraud upon the public understanding, which becomes more repugnant as general intelligence increases.

"Your petitioner respectfully submits that the present Parliamentary oath is open to these objections so long as it is obligatory upon all members, irrespective of whatever personal and private beliefs they may hold.

"Your petitioner, therefore, prays, in the interests of public good faith, that a form of affirmation may be adopted, optional to all members of Parliament, instead of the present ecclesiastical oath."

Francis Place once explained to me that in the Benthamite view, it was not warrantable to incur martyrdom unless it was clear that the public would be gainers by the martyr's loss. In a letter, Mr. J. S. Mill, in answer to questions I put to him with regard to taking an oath, wrote :—

"I conceive that when a bad law has made the oath a condition to the performance of a public duty, it may be taken without dishonesty by a person who acknowledges no binding force in the religious part of the formality. Unless (as in your own case) he has made it the special and particular

work of his life to testify against such formalities, and against the belief with which they are connected."

I could not concur with this view. Personal candour is far-reaching in its effects, and should be cherished where we can, and as far as we can. Truth is to the life of the mind what air is to the life of the body. When the mind ceases to breathe truth, the mind is impaired or dies.

It is necessary to add the grounds which actuated me in endeavours to put an end to the outlawry of opinion. Many beside myself helped to obtain a law of affirmation, but I was the only person among them all who had never taken an oath. Sir George Cornewall Lewis demanded in Parliament how the oath could be a vital grievance to Atheists, whose throats were furrowed with swallowing it. When summoned on the grand jury at Clerkenwell I refused to take the oath in the sense the court attached to it, and I was fined twelve guineas for not taking it. I drew up a paper showing the privileges given by the law to those who were honestly unable to swear. They were exempted from the militia, from the duty of acting as special constable, they could procure the acquittal of any thief, fraudulent person, or murderer, where their evidence was necessary to conviction. In some cases the thief has escaped, and the person robbed has been imprisoned instead, for his contumacy in not lying. It became known among thieves that

where they could find out a witness against them, who disbelieved in an avenging God, the counsel defending the thief had only to call the attention of the court to the fact for the witness to be ordered "to stand down," and the thief would "leave the court without a stain on his character." Mr. Francis, in his "History of the Bank of England," relates how Turner, whose fraud amounted to £10,000, escaped, because the only witness who could swear decidedly to his handwriting, was a disbeliever in the New Testament. The jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty."

Sir John Trelawny told me that the fly-leaves I published on the "Privileges of Sceptics and the Immunity of Thieves" made more impression upon members of Parliament than any petition sent to the House. These and similar services, with my lifelong refusal to take the oath, caused John Stuart Mill to write to me, saying: "It is a great triumph of freedom of opinion that the Evidence Bill should have passed both Houses without being seriously impaired. You may justly take to yourself a good share of the credit of having brought things up to that pass." [1]

These instances will no doubt satisfy the reader as to the peril of entertaining scruples in the face of power. The earliest instance which concerned me was a case in Birmingham in which several thousand pounds were left for the establishment of

[1] Blackheath Park, Kent, August 8, 1869.

a secular school which I was to conduct. Not being willing to take the oath, I could not prosecute my claim. When a son of mine was killed by the recklessness of a driver, I could not give evidence on the inquest because I could not be sworn. My private house was thrice robbed by servants who became aware of my inability to prosecute. When in business in Fleet Street, my property could be carted away, for which I had no remedy save lying in wait and knocking down the depredators, which would at the Mansion House have led to a public scandal and injured the business. Money was left to me which I could not claim, being an outlaw.

It would tire the reader to tell him all the instances of the perils attending scruples. Mr. Roebuck put the case in the House of Commons against Sir George Cornewall Lewis. Pointing his finger at Sir George, he asked, "What is the right honourable gentleman going to do? Two men go into court. One disbelieves in the oath, but he takes it. The other takes the peril of outlawry rather than profess a faith which he does not hold. You believe the liar, whom you know to be a liar, and you reject the evidence of the man who speaks the truth at his peril." I had asked Mr. Roebuck to speak when the question of affirmation was before the House. There were then only he, Sir John Trelawny, or Mr. Conyngham to whom such a question could be put. It was upon Mr. Roebuck

that I mostly relied. After his speech I thanked him for doing what no one else could do so well. He disclaimed any desert of thanks, saying, "I have only done what Jeremy Bentham taught me."

CHAPTER XXX

TAKING SIDES

EVERY ONE of manly mind, every person of thought and determination, takes sides upon important questions. Those who say they are indifferent which side prevails, are indifferent whether good or evil comes uppermost. Those who are afraid to choose a side, command only the cold respect accorded to cowardice. Those who sit upon a fence to see which side is likely to prevail before they jump down, are not seeking the success of a principle, but their own interests. In most questions—as in business—there is a side of honesty and a side of fraud. Some do not take either separately, thinking they can better take both at discretion. If they profit by their dexterous duplicity, they command no regard. Some persons have no fervour for the right, and would rather see the wrong prevail than take the trouble to prevent it. They would be on the side of truth altogether if it gave them no

discomfort, and caused them no outlay. They belong to the large Laodicean lukewarm class, of whom he who sought their allegiance said he would "spue them out of his mouth." Not a pleasant simile, but it is not mine. It shows that no one is enthusiastic about those who are undecided where decision interferes with advancement.

If the selfish, or the politic, or the supine do not care to take sides with right, they have no cause to complain if the triumph of wrong involves them in discredit or disaster. But whatever be their fate, I am not concerned with them. What I am concerned with is the omission of all information of what may follow to him who shall take the right side. These consequences ought never to be out of sight.

It is too often forgotten that in this world virtue has its price as well as vice, and neither can be bought cheap. Vice can be bought on the "hire system," by which a person gets into debt pleasantly —which introduces shiftlessness into life. Wrong is a money-lender, whose concealed charges and heavy interest have to be paid one day at the peril of ruin. Right doing may be said to pay as it goes along, which implies conscience, effort, and often sacrifice of some immediate pleasure. But independence lies that way, and no other. Right principle incurs no deferred obligation. Debt is a chain by which the debtor binds himself to some

one else. The connection may be disregarded, but the chain can never be broken, except by restitution. Many persons are beguiled into doing right under the impression that it is as pleasant as doing wrong. This is not so, and the concealment of the fact has injurious consequences. When a person who has been, as it were, betrayed into virtue, without being instructed as to the inconvenience which may attend it, when he encounters them, he suspects he has been imposed upon, and thinks he had better give vice a turn. It was this that made Huxley declare that the hardest as well as the most useful lesson a man could learn, was to do that which he ought to do, whether he liked it or not. Character, which can be trusted, comes that way, and that way alone. He who enters on that path reaps reward daily in the pleasure and strength which duty imparts, while sooner or later follow advantage and honour. The most useful character George Eliot drew was that of Tito, who was wrecked because he had no sense that there was strength and safety in truth. The only strength he trusted to lay in his ingenuity and dissimulation. The world is pretty full of Titos, who all come to one end, and nobody mourns them.

A few instances may be relevantly given in which rightness has been attended by disadvantages, when wrongness appeared to have none—yet wrongness

was found to bring great unpleasantness in the end.

When there were petitions before the House of Commons to change the oath which excluded Jews, and petitions to permit persons to make affirmations who had conscientious objections to taking an oath, it was represented to me that if both claims were kept before Parliament at the same time both would be rejected. The Jewish claim was the older, and concerned the enfranchisement of a race. I therefore caused the omission for several years of any petition for affirmation — though my disability of being unable to take the oath excluded me from justice and rendered me an outlaw.

When the Jews had obtained their relief, Sir Julian Goldsmid, a Jew, became a candidate at Brighton. Mr. Matthews, a political friend of mine in the town, went to Sir Julian and asked whether, as Mr. Holyoake and those of his way of thinking had deferred their claim for affirmation that the Jews might become eligible for Parliament, would he vote for the Affirmation Bill? He said, "No! he would not." Mr. Matthews then wrote to ask me whether he and others who were in favour of Affirmation should vote for Sir Julian. I answered, "Certainly, if he in other respects was the best candidate before the constituency. However strongly we might be persuaded our own claim

was just, we had no right to prefer it to the general interest of the State."

Speaking one night with Mr. John Morley when we both happened to be guests of Mr. Chamberlain at Highbury, Birmingham, I remarked that Cobden and Bright, without intending it, had introduced more immorality into politics than any other politicians in my time. Mr. Morley naturally demanded to be informed when, and in what way. I answered, "When they advised electors to vote for any candidate, irrespective of their political opinion, who would vote against the Corn Laws. This incited every party to vote for its own hand—the priest for the church, the brewers for the barrel, and the teetotalers for the teapot, the anti-vaccinators for those who were against the lancet. Even women proposed to vote for any candidate who would give them the suffrage, regardless whether they put out a Ministry of Progress and put in a Ministry of Reaction. This was ignoring the general good in favour of a personal measure. The error of the great Anti-Corn Law advocates lay in their not making it plain to the country that when the population were deteriorating and dying from want of sufficient food, politics must give way to the claims of existence. That was the justification of Cobden and Bright, and had it been stated, smaller politicians with narrower aims could never then have pleaded their example for crowding the poll with rival claims in which the larger interests of

the State are forgotten. Like Bacon's maxim that speaking the truth was so excellent a habit, "that any departure from that wholesome rule should be noted." The Anti-Corn Law League election policy needed noting.

However many instances may be given of the kind before the reader, the moral will be the same. Taking sides involves some penalty which enthusiasts are apt to overlook, and when it arrives ruddy eagerness is apt to turn pale and change into ignoble prudence. Taking the side of honesty or fraud, unpleasantness may come. But on the side of right the consciousness of integrity mitigates regret and commands respect; while the penalties of deceit are intensified by shame and scorn. Many think there is safety in a judicious mixture of good faith and bad, but when the bad is discerned, distrust and contempt are the unevadable consequences. Besides, it takes more trouble to conceal a sinister life than to act uprightly. It is true, an evil policy often succeeds, but the interest of society is to take care that he who does evil shall be overtaken by evil. As this sentiment grows, the chances of illicit success continually decrease. Rascality—refined or coarse—would have fewer adherents if society took as much trouble to secure that the rightdoer shall prosper, as it takes to render the career of the knave precarious.

The point of importance, I repeat, is—that persons should remember, or be taught to remember,

that the course of right, like the course of wrong, is attended by consequences. Many who are honourably attracted by the right are disappointed at finding that it has its duties as well as its pleasures —which, had they known at first, they would have made up their minds to do them ; but not being apprised of them, when they first encounter inconvenience, they think they have been deceived, falter, and sometimes turn from a noble course upon which they had entered.

Any one would think there was no great peril to be encountered by taking sides with veracity. Let him avoid the sin of pretension, and see what will happen.

The sin I referred to is not the common one of declaring that to be true which you know to be untrue—that has long been known by an appropriate name, and does not require any new epithet to denote its scandalousness. The sin of pretension in question consists in assuming, or declaring that to be true, which one does not know to be true. Years ago this was a very common sin, and everybody committed it. You heard it in the pulpit more frequently than on the stage. Nobody complained of it, or rebuked it, or resented it. It was not until the middle of the last century that public attention was drawn to it. It was Huxley who first raised the question of intellectual veracity, and he devised the term Agnostic (which merely means limitation) to express it. Limitationism does not

mean disbelief, but the limitation of assertion to actual knowledge. The theist used to declare—without misgiving—the absolute certainty of the existence of an independent, active Entity, to whom Nature is second-hand, and not much at that. The anti-theist—also without misgiving—denied that there was such separate Potentiality. The Limitationist, more modest in averment, not having sufficient information to be positive, simply says he does not know. He does not say that others may not have sufficient knowledge of a primal cause of things; but lacking it himself, he concludes that veracity in statement may be a virtue where omniscience is denied. There may be belief founded on inference. But inference is not knowledge. The Limitationist withholds assertion from lack of satisfying evidence. He is neutral—not because he wishes not to believe, or desires to deny, but because serious language should be measured by the standard of proof and conviction.

So strange did this precaution in speech seem in my time, that it was believed that reticence was not honest precaution, but prudent concealment of actual conviction, intended to evade orthodox anger. On problems relating to infinite existence and an unknown future, it requires infinite knowledge to give an affirmative answer. No one said he had infinite information, but everybody declaimed as though he had. It appeared not to have occurred

to many that there was a state of the understanding in which lack of conviction was owing to lack of evidence. Where the desire to believe is hereditary, it is difficult to realise that there are questions upon which certainty may, to many minds, be unattainable, and that an honest man who felt this was bound to say so. An American journal, which needed forbearance from its readers for its own heresy, published the opinion that Huxley was a "dodger" in philosophy. Whereas Huxley was for integrity in thought and speech. He was for scientific accuracy as far as attainable. His own outspokenness was the glory of philosophy and science in his day. He never denied his convictions; he never apologised for them; he never explained them away. Is it over his noble tomb that we are to write, "Here lies a Dodger," because he invented an honest term to denote the measured knowledge of honest thinkers? Dogmatism is not demonstration, but when I was young nobody seemed to suspect it. It used to be said that "Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer were not really in a state of unknowingness concerning the great problem of the universe"—which meant that these eminent thinkers, upon whose lives no shadow of unveracity ever rested, described themselves as Limitationists when they were not so. They were not to be believed upon their word. The term was a mask. Such are the social penalties for taking sides with veracity.

The public has begun to discover that veracity of speech is not a mask, but a duty. None can calculate the calamities which arise in society from the perpetual misdirections disseminated by those who make assertions resting merely upon their inherited belief or prepossessions, with no personal knowledge upon which they are founded. This is the sin of pretension, which recedes before the integrity of science and reason, just as wild beasts recede before the march of civilisation.

Few would be prepared to believe that, in my polemical days, the desire to avoid committing the sin of pretension was supposed to indicate desperation of character, of which suicide would be the natural end. This was a favourite argument, for a heterodox principle was held to be for ever confuted, if he who held it hanged himself. The best proclaimed champion of orthodox tenets, whom I met on many platforms, went about declaring that I intended suicide, and it was generally believed that I had committed it. The certainty of it, sooner or later, was little doubted, whereas it was not at all in my way.

The suicide of Eugene Aram, to escape the ignominy of an inevitable execution, is intelligible. If Blanco White, whose dying and hopeless sufferings excited the sympathy even of Cardinal Newman, had done the same thing, it would have been condonable. Suicide proceeding from disease of the mind is always pitiable. When Italian prisoners

were given belladonna by their Austrian gaolers, to cause them to betray, unconsciously, their comrades; some committed suicide to prevent this, which was honourable though deplorable. When a murderer, knowing his desert, becomes his own executioner, he is not censurable though still infamous, since it saves society the expense of terminating his dangerous career. But in other cases, self-slaughter, to avoid trouble or the performance of inconvenient duty, is cowardly and detestable.

In my controversial days (which I hope are not yet ended) the clergy did not hesitate to say that if a man began to think for himself, he would end by killing himself.

When I thought the doctrine had died out, an instance recurred which led me to address the following letter to the Rev. R. P. Downes, LL.D. (May 18, 1899), who thought the doctrine valid :—

"Dear Dr. Downes,—It has been reported to me that in Wesley Place Chapel, Tunstall (March 20, 1899), you, when preaching on the 'Roots of Unbelief,' illustrated that troublesome subject by saying that 'when Mr. Holyoake was imprisoned at Birmingham, he attempted suicide.' This is not true, nor was it in Birmingham, but in Gloucester where the imprisonment occurred. I never attempted suicide—it was never in my mind

to do it. I had no motive that way. I experienced no moment of despair. Better men than I had been imprisoned before, for being so imprudent as to protest against intolerance and error. Besides, I never liked suicide. I was always against it. Blowing out your brains makes an ill-conditioned splatter. Cutting your throat is a detestable want of consideration for those who have to efface the stains. Drowning is disagreeable, as the water is cold and not clean. Hanging is mean and ignominious, and I have always heard unpleasant. The French charcoal plan makes you sick. Indeed, every form of suicide shows want of taste; and worse than that, it is a cowardly thing to flee from evils you ought to combat, and leave others, whom you may be bound to cherish and protect, to struggle unaided. So you see what you allege against me is not only irrelevant —it implies defect of taste, which is serious in the eyes of society, which will condone crime more readily than vulgarity.

"I am against your discourse because of its bad taste. Suicide is no argument against the truth of belief. Christians are continually committing it, and clergymen also. The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge used to bring this argument from suicide forward in their tracts against heresy. But being educated gentlemen they abandoned it long ago, and it is now only used by the lower class of preachers.

I do not mean to suggest that you belong to that class—only that you have condescended to use an argument peculiar to uncultivated reasoners.

"Personally, I have great respect for several eminent preachers of Wesleyan persuasion, but they think it necessary to inquire into the truth of an accusation before they make it. You must have borrowed yours from the Rev. Brewin Grant, with whom in his last illness I had friendly communications, and he had long ceased to repeat what he said in days when it was not thought necessary to be exact in imputations against adversaries.

"I do not remember to have written before in refutation of the statement you made. No one who knows me would believe it for a moment; but as you are a responsible, and I understand a well-regarded, preacher, I inform you of the error, especially as it gives me the opportunity of putting on record not only my disinclination, but my dislike and contempt for suicide, and for those who, not being hopelessly diseased or insane, commit it."

Dr. Downes sent me a gentlemanly and candid letter, owning that the Rev. Brewin Grant, B.A., was the authority on which he spoke, whose representations he would not repeat, and I have reason to believe he has not.

Such are the vicissitudes of taking sides. He has to pay who takes the right, but he has honour in the end. But he pays more who takes the wrong side consciously, and with it comes infamy.

CHAPTER XXXI

THINGS WHICH WENT AS THEY WOULD

I COMMENCE with Judge Hughes' first candidature. There are cases in which gratitude is submerged by prejudice, even among the cultivated classes. There was Thomas Hughes, whose statue has been deservedly erected in Rugby. Three years before he became a member of Parliament I told him he might enter the House were he so minded. And when opportunity arose I was able to confirm my assurance.

One Friday afternoon in 1865 some Lambeth politicians of the middle and working classes, whom Bernal Osborne had disappointed of being their candidate (a vacancy having attracted him elsewhere), came to me at the House of Commons to inquire if I could suggest one to them. I named Mr. Hughes as a good fighting candidate, who had sympathy with working people, and who, being honest, could be trusted in what he promised, and being an athlete, could, like Feargus O'Connor,

be depended upon on a turbulent platform. I was to see Mr. Hughes at once, which I did, and after much argument satisfied him that if he took the "occasion by the hand" he might succeed. He said, "he must first consult Sally" —meaning Mrs. Hughes. I had heard him sing "Sally in our Alley," and took his remark as a playful allusion to his wife as the heroine of the song. That he might be under no illusion, I suggested that he should not enter upon the contest unless he was prepared to lose £1,000.

The next morning he consented. I took him to my friends of the Electoral Committee, by whom he was accepted. When he entered the vestibule of the hall of meeting I left him, lest my known opinions on other subjects should compromise him in the minds of some electors. This was on the Saturday afternoon. I saw that by issuing an address in the Monday morning papers he would be first in the field. On Sunday morning, therefore, I waited for him at the Vere Street Church door, where the Rev. F. D. Maurice preached, to ask him to write at once his address to the electors. He thought more of his soul than of his success, and reluctantly complied with my request. His candidature might prevent a Tory member being elected, and the labours of the Liberal electors for years being rendered futile, education put back, the Liberal Association discouraged, taxation of

the people increased, and the moral and political deterioration of the borough ensue. To avert all such evils the candidate was loath to peril his salvation for an hour. Yet would it not have been a work of human holiness to do it, which would make his soul better worth saving? That day I had lunch at his table in Park Lane, while he thought the matter over. That was the first and last time I was asked to his house. That afternoon he brought the address to my home, then known as Dymoke Lodge, Oval Road, Regent's Park, and had tea with my family. I had collected several persons in another room ready to make copies of the address.

I wrote letters to various editors, took a cab, and left a copy of the address myself, before ten o'clock, at the offices of all the chief newspapers published on Monday morning. The editor of the *Daily News* and one or two others I saw personally. All printed the address as news, free of expense. Next morning the Liberal electors were amazed to see their candidate "first in the field" before any other had time to appear. All the while I knew Mr. Hughes would vote against three things which I valued, and in favour of which I had written and spoken. He would vote against the ballot, against opening picture galleries and museums on Sunday, and against the separation of the Church from the State. But on the whole

he was calculated to promote the interests of the country, and therefore I did what I could to promote his election.

I wrote for the election two or three bills. The following is one :—

HUGHES FOR LAMBETH.

Vote for "Tom Brown."

Vote for a Gentleman who is a friend of the People.

Vote for a Churchman who will do justice to Dissenters.

Vote for a tried Politician who will support just measures and can give sensible reasons for them.

Vote for a distinguished writer and raise the character of metropolitan constituencies.

Vote for a candidate who can defend your cause in the Press as well as in Parliament.

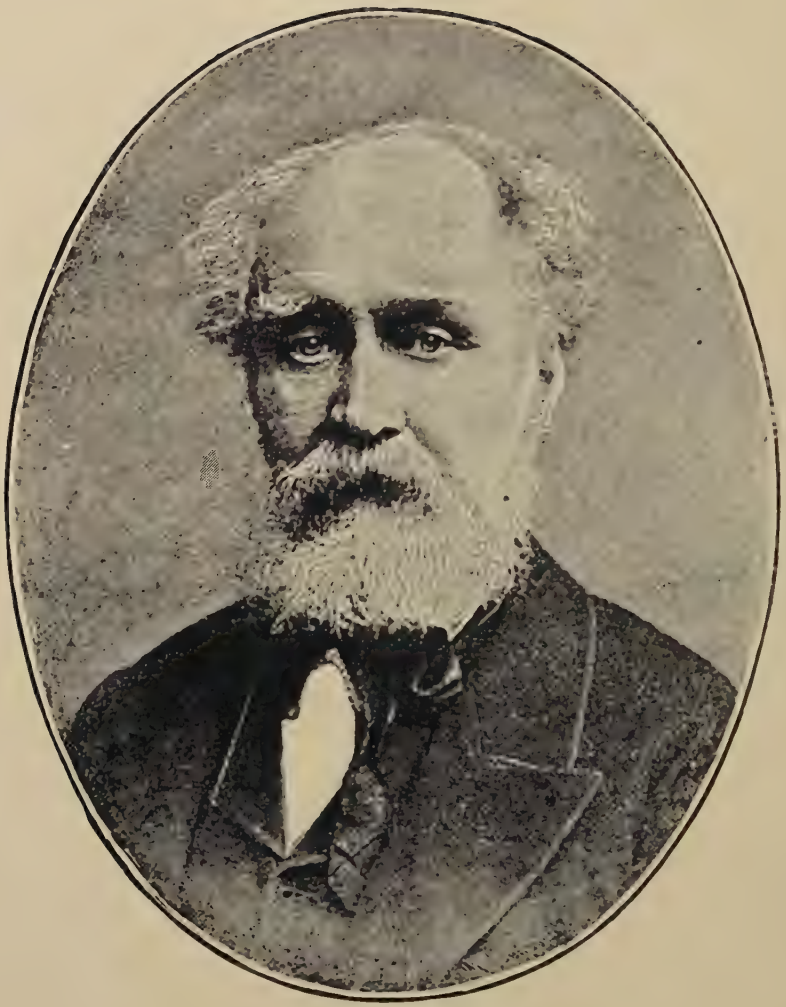
Vote for a man known to be honest and who has long worked for the industrious classes.

Electors of Lambeth, vote for Thomas Hughes.

Mr. Hughes would have had no address out but for me. Had he spent £100 in advertisements a day or two later he could not have purchased the advantage this promptitude gave him. I worked very hard all that Sunday, a son and daughter helping—but our souls did not count. Two weeks

went by—during which I ceaselessly promulgated his candidature—and I heard nothing from the candidate. As I had paid the emergency expenses of the Sunday copyists, found them refreshments while they wrote, and paid for the cab on its round to the offices, I found myself £2 "out of pocket," as lawyers put it, and I sent a note to Mr. Hughes to say that amount would cover costs incurred. He replied in a curt note saying I should "find a cheque for £2 within"—giving me the impression that he regarded it as an extortion, which he thought it better to submit to than resent. He never thanked me, then or at any time, for what I did. Never in all his life did he refer to the service I had rendered him.

A number of friends were invited to Great Ormond Street College to celebrate his election, but I was not one. This was not handsome treatment, but I thought little of it. It was not Mr. Hughes's natural, but his ecclesiastical self. I withstood him and his friends, the Christian Socialists, who sought to colour Co-operation with Church tenets, which would put distraction into it. Association with me was at that time repugnant to Mr. Hughes. Nevertheless, I continued to serve him whenever I could. He was a friend of Co-operation, to his cost, and was true to the Liberal interests of the people. My daughter, Mrs. Praill, and her husband gave their house as a committee-room when Mr. Hughes was subsequently a can-



EDWARD VANSITTART NEALE.

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didate in Marylebone, and she canvassed for him so assiduously that he paid her a special visit of acknowledgment.

The Christian Socialist propaganda is another instance of the wilfulness of things which went as you did not want them to go. In those days not only did I fail to find favour in the eyes of Mr. Hughes—even Mr. Vansittart Neale, the most liberal of Christian Socialists, thought me, for some years, an unengaging colleague. General Maurice, in the Life of his eminent father (Professor Denison Maurice), relates that Mr. Maurice regarded me as an antagonist. This was never so. I had always respect for Professor Maurice because of his theological liberality. He believed that perdition was limited to æons. The duration of an æon he was not clear upon; but whatever its length, it was then an unusual and merciful limitation of eternal torture. This cost him his Professorship at King's College, through the enmity, it was said, of Professor Jelf. I endeavoured to avenge Professor Maurice by dedicating to Dr. Jelf my "Limits of Atheism." Elsewhere I assailed him because I had honour for Professor Maurice, for his powerful friendship to Co-operation. When the news of his death came to the Bolton Congress it was I who drew up and proposed the resolution of honour and sorrow which we passed.

It was always the complaint against the early "Socialists"—as the Co-operators were then called

—that they mixed up polemical controversy with social advocacy. The Christian Socialists strenuously made this objection, yet all the while they were seeking to do the same thing. What they rightly objected to was that the chief Co-operators gave irrelevant prominence to the alien question of theology, and repelled all persons who differed from them.

All the while, what they objected to was not theology, but to a kind of theology not their own, and this kind, as soon as they acquired authority, they proceeded to introduce. They proceeded to compile a handbook intended to pledge the Co-operators to the Church of England, and I received proofs, which I still have, in which Mr. Hughes made an attack on all persons of Freethinking views. I objected to this as violating the principle on which we had long agreed, namely, of Co-operative neutrality in religion [1] and politics, as their introduction was the signal of disputation which diverted the attention of members from the advancement of Co-operation in life, trade, and labour. At the Leeds Congress I maintained that the congress was like Parliament, where, as Canning said, no question is introduced which cannot be discussed. If Church views were imported into the societies, Heretics and Nonconformists, who were the originators of the movement, would have the right of introducing

[1] Personally, I preferred controversy *outside* Co-operation.

their tenets. Mr. Hughes was so indignant at my protest that he, being in the chair, refused to call upon me to move a resolution officially assigned to me upon another subject. At the meeting of the United Board for revising motions to be brought before Congress, I gave notice that if the Church question should be raised I should object to it, as it would then be in order (should the introduction of theology be sanctioned) for an Atheist (Agnostic was not a current word then) to propose the adoption of his views, and an Atheist, as such, might be a president. Whereupon Mr. Vansittart Neale, our general secretary, declared with impassioned vehemence that he hoped the day would never come when an Atheist would be elected president. Yet when, some years later, I was appointed president of the Carlisle Congress (1887)—though I was still considered entirely deficient in proper theological convictions—Mr. Hughes and Mr. Neale, who were both present, were most genial, and with their concurrence 100,000 copies of my address were printed—a distinction which befel no other president.

In another instance I had to withstand Church ascendancy.

I was the earliest and foremost advocate of the neutrality of pious opinion in Co-operation; when others who knew its value were silent—afraid or unwilling to give pain to the Christian

Socialists, whom we all respected, and to whom we were all indebted for legal and friendly assistance.

But integrity of principle is higher than friendship. Some Northumbrian societies, whose members were largely Nonconformists, were greatly indignant at the attempt to give ascendancy to Church opinions, and volunteered to support my protest against it. But when the day of protest came at the Leeds Congress they all deserted me—not one raised a voice on my side; though they saw me browbeaten in their interest. My argument was, that if we assented to become a Church party we might come to have our proceedings opened with a collect, or by prayer, to which it would be hypocrisy in many to pretend to assent. At the following Derby Congress this came to pass: Bishop Southwell, who opened the Industrial Exhibition, made a prayer and members of the United Board knelt round him. I was the only one who stood up, it being the only seemly form of protest there. This scene was never afterwards repeated. Bishop Southwell was a devout, kindly, and intellectually liberal prelate, but he did not know, or did not respect, as other Bishops did, the neutrality of Congress.

For myself, I was always in favour of the individuality of the religious conscience in its proper place. I love the picturesqueness of personal con-

viction. It was I who first proposed that we should accept offers of sermons on Congress Sunday by ministers of every denomination. Co-operators included members of all religious persuasions, and I was for their opportunity of hearing favourite preachers apart from Co-operative proceedings.

It is only necessary for the moral of these instances to pursue them. There is education in them and public suggestiveness which may justify the continuance of the subject.

When the *Co-operative News* was begun in Manchester (1871), I wrote its early leaders, and as its prospects were not hopeful, it was agreed that the *Social Economist*, which I and Mr. E. O. Greening had established in London in 1868, should cease in favour of the *Co-operative News*, as we wished to see one paper, one interest, and one party. As the Manchester office was too poor to purchase our journal, we agreed that it should be paid for when the Manchester paper succeeded, and the price should be what the cessation of the *Social Economist* should be thought to be worth to the new paper. It was sixteen years before the fulfilment of their side of the bargain. The award, if I remember rightly, was £15, but I know the period was as long and the amount as small. The *Co-operative News* had then been established many years. It was worth much more than £100 to the Manchester paper to have a London rival out of the way. It was not

an encouraging transaction, and but for Mr. Neale, Abraham Greenwood and Mr. Crabtree it would not have ended as it did. But the committee were workmen without knowledge of literary matters. So I made no complaint, and worked with them and for their paper all the same. It was a mistake to discontinue the *Social Economist*, which had some powerful friends. Co-operation was soon narrowed in Manchester. Co-operative workshops were excluded from participation in profit. We should have kept Co-operation on a higher level in London.

The Rochdale Jubilee is the last instance I shall cite. In 1892 was celebrated the jubilee of the Rochdale Society. I received no invitation and no official notice. The handbook published by the society, in commemoration of its fifty years' success, made no reference to me nor to the services I had rendered the society. I had written its history, which had been printed in America, and translated into the chief languages of Europe—in Spain, in Hungary, several times in France and Italy. I had put the name of the Pioneers into the mouth of the world, yet my name was never mentioned by any one. Speaking on the part of the Rochdale Co-operators, the President of Jubilee Congress, who knew the facts of my devotion to the reputation of Rochdale, was silent. Archdeacon Wilson was the only one who showed me public regard. The local press said some gracious things, but they were not

Co-operators. I had spoken at the graves of the men who had made the fortunes of the store, and had written words of honour of all the political leaders of the town, and of those best remembered in connection with the famous society, which I had vindicated, without ceasing, during half a century.

In the earlier struggles of the Pioneers I had looked forward to the day of their jubilee, when I should stand in their regard as I had done in their day of need. Of course, this gave me a little concern to find myself treated as one unknown to them. But in truth they had not forgotten me, though they ignored me. The new generation of Co-operators had abandoned, to Mr. Bright's regret, participation of profit with Labour, the noblest aspiration of the Pioneers. I had addressed them in remonstrance, in the language of Lord Byron, who was Lord of the Manor of Rochdale :—

> "You have the Rochdale store as yet,
> Where has the Rochdale workshop gone?
> Of two such lessons why forget
> The nobler and the manlier one?"

Saying this cost me their cordiality and their gratitude ; but I cared for the principle and for the future, and was consoled.

In every party, the men who made it great die, and leave no immediate successors. But in time their example recreates them. But at the

Jubilee of 1892, they had not re-appeared, and those who had memories and gratitude were dead. I spoke over the grave of Cooper, of Smithies, of Thomas Livesey — John Bright's schoolfellow—the great friend of the dead Pioneers saying :—

> "They are gone, the holy ones,
> Who trod with me this lovely vale;
> My old star-bright companions
> Are silent, low and pale." [1]

The question arises, does this kind of experience justify a person in deserting his party?

The last incident and others preceding it are given as instances of outrage or neglect, which in public life explain ignominious desertion of principle. I have known men change sides in Parliament because the Premier, who had defect of sight, passed them by in the lobby without recognition. I have seen others desert a party, which they had brilliantly served, because their personal ambition had not been recognised. Because of this I have seen a man turn heels over head in the presence of Parliament, and land himself in the laps of adversaries who had been kicking him all his life.

If I did not do so, it was because I remembered that parties are like persons, who at one time do mean things, but at other times generous things.

[1] "History of Rochdale Pioneers, 1844–1892" (Sonnenschein).

Besides, a democratic party is continually changing in its component members, and many come to act in the name of the movement who are ignorant of its earlier history and of the obligation it may be under to those who have served it in its struggling days. But whether affronts are consciously given or not, they do not count where allegiance to a cause is concerned. Ingratitude does not invalidate a true principle. When contrary winds blow, a fair-weather partisan tacks about, and will even sail into a different sea where the breezes are more complacent. I remained the friend of the cause alike in summer and winter, not because I was insensible to vicissitudes, but because it was a simple duty to remain true to a principle whose integrity was not and could not be affected by the caprice, the meanness, the obliviousness, or the malignity of its followers.

Such are some of the incidents—of which others of more public interest may be given—of the nature of bygones which have instruction in them. They are not peculiar to any party. They occur continually in Parliament and in the Church. I have seen persons who had rendered costly service of long duration who, by some act of ingratitude on the part of the few, have turned against the whole class, which shows that, consciously or unconsciously, it was self-recognition they sought, or most cared for, rather than the service of the principle they had espoused.

There is no security for the permanence of public effort, save in the clear conviction of its intrinsic rightfulness and conduciveness to the public good. The rest must be left to time and posterity. True, the debt is sometimes paid after the creditor is dead. But if reparation never comes to the living, unknown persons whose condition needs betterment receive it, and that is the proud and consoling thought of those who—unrequited—effected it. The wholesome policy of persistence is expressed in the noble maxim of Helvetius to which John Morley has given new currency: "Love men, but do not expect too much from them."

Fewer persons would fall into despair if their anticipations were, like a commercial company, "limited." Many men expect in others perfection, who make no conspicuous contribution themselves to the sum of that excellent attribute.

"Giving too little and asking too much
Is not alone a fault of the Dutch."

I do not disguise that standing by Rightness is an onerous duty. It is as much a merit as it is a distinction to have been, at any time, in the employ of Truth. But Truth, though an illustrious, is an exacting mistress, and that is why so many people who enter her service soon give notice to leave.

[With respect to this chapter, Mr. Ludlow wrote supplying some particulars regarding the Christian Socialists, to which it is due to him that equal publicity be given. He states "that the first Council of Promoters included two members, neither of whom professed to be a Christian; that the first secretary of the Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations was not one, during the whole of his faithful service (he became one twenty years later), and that his successors were, at the time we took them on, one an Agnostic, the other a strong Congregationalist." This is the first time these facts have been made known. But none of the persons thus described had anything to do with the production of the Handbook referred to and discussed at the Leeds Congress of 1881. Quite apart from the theological tendencies of the "Christian Socialists," the Co-operative movement has been indebted to them for organisation and invaluable counsel, as I have never ceased to say. They were all for the participation of profits in workshops, which is the essential part of higher Co-operation. There was always light in their speeches, and it was the light of principle. In this respect Mr. Ludlow was the first, as he is the last to display it, as he alone survives that distinguished band. Of Mr. Edward Vansittart Neale I have unmeasured admiration and regard. To use the fine saying of Abd-el-Kader, "Benefits conferred are golden

fetters which bind men of noble mind to the giver." This is the lasting sentiment of the most experienced Co-operators towards the Christian Socialists.]

CHAPTER XXXII

STORY OF THE LAMBETH PALACE GROUNDS

SEED sown upon the waters, we are told, may bring forth fruit after many days. This chapter tells the story of seed sown on very stony soil, which brought forth fruit twenty-five years later.

In 1878, Mr. George Anderson, an eminent consulting gas engineer, in whom business had not abated human sympathy, passed every morning on his way to his chambers in Westminster, by the Lambeth Palace grounds. He was struck by the contrast of the spacious and idle acres adjoining the Palace and the narrow, dismal streets where poor children peered in corners and alleys. The sheep in the Palace grounds were fat and florid, and the children in the street were lean and pallid. The smoke from works around dyed dark the fleece of the sheep.

Mr. Anderson thought how much happier a sight it would be to see the children take the

place of the sheep, and asked me if something could not be done.

The difficulty of rescuing or of alienating nine acres of land from the Church, so skilled in holding, did not seem a hopeful undertaking, while the resentment of good vicars and expectant curates might surely be counted upon. Nevertheless the attempt was worth making.

Before long I spent portions of some days in exploring the Palace grounds, and interviewing persons who had evidence to give, or interest to use, on behalf of a change which seemed so desirable.

Eventually I brought the matter before a meeting I knew to be interested in ethical improvement, and read to them the draft of a memorial that I thought ought to be sent to the Archbishop at Lambeth Palace. Persons in stations low and high alike, often suffer wrong to exist which they might arrest, because they have not seen it to be wrong or have not been told that it is so. Blame of any one could not be justly expressed who had not personal knowledge of an evil complained of. Therefore I urged that we should give the Archbishop information which we thought justified his action, and I was authorised to send to him the memorial I had read.

I wrote myself to his Grace, stating that I could testify as to the social facts detailed

in the memorial I enclosed, which was as follows :—

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—We, the evening congregation assembled in South Place Chapel, Finsbury—some assenting and some dissenting from the tenets represented by your Grace—represented as worthily as by any one who has occupied your high station, and with greater fairness to those who stand outside the Church than is shown by many prelates—we pray your Grace to give heed to a secular plea on behalf of certain little neighbours of yours whom, amid the pressure of spiritual duties, your Grace may have overlooked.

"Crouching under the very walls of Lambeth Palace, where your Grace has the pleasant responsibility of illustrating the opulence and paternal sympathy of the legal Church of the land, lie streets as dismal, cheerless, and discreditable as any that God in His wrath ever permitted to remain unconsumed. In the houses are polluted air, squalor, dirt and pale-faced children. The only green thing upon which their feverish eyes could look is enclosed in your Grace's Palace Park, and shut out from their sight by dead walls. What we pray is that your Grace, in mercy and humanity, will substitute for those penal walls some pervious palisades through which children may behold the refreshing paradise of

Nature, though they may never enter therein. In this ever-crowding metropolis, where field and tree belong to the extinct sights of a happier age, children are born and die without ever knowing their soothing charm, and hunger and thirst for a green thing to look upon—as sojourners in a desert do for the sight of shrub or water. No prayer your Grace could offer to heaven would be so welcome in its kindly courts, as the prayer of gladness and gratitude which would go up with the screams of change and joy from the pallid little ones, breathing the fresh air from the green meadows, which only a few more fortunate sheep now enjoy.

"Might we pray that the gates should be open, and that the children themselves should be free to enter the meadows? Even the Temple Gardens of the City are open to little friendless people. They who give this gracious permission are hard-souled lawyers, usually regarded as representing the rigid, exacting, and unsympathetic side of human life—yet they show such noble tenderness to the little miserables who crawl round the Temple pavement, that they grant entrance to their splendid gardens; and half-clad cellar urchins from the purlieus of Drury Lane and Clare Market romp with their ragged sisters on the glorious grass, in the sight and scent of beauteous flowers. If lawyers do this, may we not ask it of one who is appointed to represent what we are told

is the kindliness and tenderness of Christianity, and whose Master said, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven'? We ask not that they should personally approach your Grace, but that the children of your desolate neighbourhood should be allowed to disport in the vacant meadows of the Palace—that their souls may acquire some scent of Nature which their lives may never know.

"Let your Grace take a walk down 'Royal Street,' which flanks your Palace grounds, and see whether houses so pestilential ever stood in a street of so dainty a name? Go into the houses (as the writer of this memorial has) and see how a blank wall has been kept up so that no occupant of the rooms may look on grass or tree, and the window which admits light and air has been turned, by order of a former archbishop, the opposite way upon an outlook as wretched as the lot of the inhabitants. For forty years many inmates have lived and slept by the side of your Grace's park, without ever being allowed a glimpse of it. You may have no power to cancel such social outrage—but your Grace may condone it by kindly and considerately according the use of the meadows to the poor children — doomed to burrow in these close, unwholesome tenements at your doors.

"No one accuses your Grace of being wanting in

personal kindliness. It must be that no one has called your attention to the unregarded misery under the shadow of your Palace. Should your Grace visit the forlorn streets and sickly homes around you, and hear the despairing words of the mothers when asked 'whether they would not be grateful could their children have a daily run in the great Archbishop's meadows?' there would not be wanting a plea from the gentle heart of the Lady of the Palace on behalf of these hapless children of these poor mothers.

"Disregard not our appeal, we pray, because ours are unlicensed voices. Humanity is of every creed, and it will not detract from the glory of the Church that gratitude and praise should proceed from unaccustomed tongues.

"Signed on behalf of the Assembly, with deference and respect.

"George Jacob Holyoake.

"Newcastle Chambers, Temple Bar,
"November 21, 1878."

Within two days I had the pleasure to receive a reply from the Archbishop.

"Philpstoun House,
"*November* 23, 1878.

"Sir,—You may feel confident that the subject of the memorial which you have forwarded to me with your letter of the 21st will receive my attentive consideration. The condition of the inhabitants of

the poor streets in Lambeth has often given me anxiety. My daughters and Mrs. Tait are well acquainted with many of the houses which you describe, and, so far as my other duties have allowed, I have taken opportunities of visiting some of the inmates of such houses personally. I should esteem it a great privilege if I were able to assist in maturing any scheme for improving the dwellings of the poor families to which your memorial alludes. Respecting the use of the open ground which surrounds Lambeth Palace, I have, in common with my predecessors, had the subject often under consideration. The plan which has been adopted and which has appeared on the whole the best for the interests of the neighbourhood, has been that now pursued for many years. The ground is freely given for cricket and football to as many schools and clubs as it is capable of containing, and, on application, liberty of entrance is accorded to children and others. Many school treats are also held in the grounds, and they are from time to time used for volunteer corps to exercise in. We have always been afraid that a more public opening of the grounds would interfere with the useful purposes to which they are at present turned for the benefit of the neighbourhood, and that, considering the somewhat limited extent of the space, no advantage could be secured by throwing it entirely open, which would at all compensate for the loss of the advan-

tages at present enjoyed. I shall give the matter serious consideration, consulting with those best qualified from local experience to judge what is best for the neighbourhood, but my present impression is that more good is, on the whole, done by the arrangements now adopted, than by any other which I could devise.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"A. C. CANTUAR.

"To Mr. George Jacob Holyoake."

This correspondence I sent to the *Daily News*, always open to questions of interest to the people, and it received notice in various papers. The *Liverpool Daily Mail* gave an effective summary of the memorial, saying:—

"Of all strange people in the world, Mr. G. J. Holyoake and the Archbishop of Canterbury have been in correspondence—and not in unfriendly correspondence either. Mr. Holyoake, on behalf of himself and some friends like-minded, ventured to draw the Archbishop's attention to the fact that just opposite Lambeth Palace was a nest of very poor and squalid dwellings, in which many families were crowded together, without any regard for either decency or sanitary law. The only chance of looking upon anything green that the children of these poor people could have would be in the

grounds that surround the Primate's dwelling, and these were absolutely shut off from their view by a high dead wall. In some cases a former Archbishop had actually ordered the windows of these miserable houses to be blocked up, and opened in another direction, in order, we suppose, that the Archiepiscopal eyes might not be offended by the sight of such unpleasant neighbours." The writer ended by expressing the hope that if the Archbishop could not open the grounds he might substitute "pervious palisades" for the stone walls impervious to the curious and wistful eyes of children. For reasons which will appear, the subject slumbered for four years, when I addressed the following letter to the editors of the *Telegraph* and the *Times*, which appeared December 20, 1882 :—

"Sir,—On returning to England I read an announcement that the Lambeth Vestry had resolved to send a memorial to the Queen praying that the nine acres of field, now devoted to sheep, adjoining the Archbishop of Canterbury's Palace garden, may be appropriated to public recreation in that crowded and verdureless parish. Four years ago I sent a memorial upon this subject to the late Archbishop. It set forth that the parish was so densely populated that it would be an act of mercy to throw open the sheep fields to the poor children of the neighbourhood. It expressed the hope that Mrs. Tait, whose compassionate nature

was known to the people, would plead for these little ones, who lived and died at her very door, as it were, seeing no green thing during all their wretched days. I visited poor women in the street next to the fields who brought fever-stricken children to the door wrapped in shawls. Their mothers told me how glad they should be were the gates open, that the little ones, whose only recreation ground was the gutter, could enter at will. The memorial—if I remember accurately, for I cannot refer to it as I write—stated that the houses which, as built, overlooked the fields, had had the windows bricked in by order of a former Archbishop, because they overlooked the garden. I was taken to the rooms and found that the view was closed up. The trees of the garden have well grown now, and a telescope could not reveal walkers therein. The late Archbishop sent me a kindly reply, but it did not answer my question, which was that, if his Grace could not consent to open the gates to his humble friends, we prayed that he, whose Master (in words of tenderness which had moved the hearts of men during nineteen centuries) had said, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me,' would at least substitute palisades for the dead walls which hid the green fields so that no little eyes could see the daisies in the spring. His Grace's reply was in substance the same as Dr. Randall Davidson's, which appeared in the *Times* on Monday, who tells the public that rifle

corps and cricketers are admitted to the fields and that 'arrangements are made for "treats" for infant and other schools' (whether of all denominations is not stated). How can poor mothers and sickly children get within these 'arrangements'? Cricketers are not helpless, rifle corps do not die for want of drill-grounds, as children in fever-dens do for want of the refreshment of verdure and pure air. To open the gates is the only generous and fitting thing to do, as the lawyers have who admit the outcasts of Drury and the adjacent lanes to the flowers of the Temple Gardens. Dr. Davidson says that the advice of those 'best qualified from local experience to judge' is that 'no gain could be secured by throwing the fields entirely open.' Let the opinion be asked of workmen in the Lambeth factories and that of their wives. These are the 'best qualified local judges,' whose verdict would be instructive. Mrs. Tait's illness and death followed soon after the memorial in question was sent in, and I thought it not the time to press his Grace further when stricken with that calamity. All honour to the Lambeth Vestry, which proposes to pray Her Majesty to cause, if in her power, these vacant fields to be consigned to the Board of Works, who will give some gleam of a green paradise to the poor little ones of Lambeth. The vestry does well to appeal to the Queen, from whose kindly heart a thousand acts of sympathy have emanated. She

has opened many portals, but none through which happier or more grateful groups will pass than through the garden gates of Lambeth Palace."

Immediately a letter appeared in the *Times* from the Rev. T. B. Robertson, expressed as follows :—

"Sir,—Mr. Holyoake may be glad to hear that 'Lambeth Green' is open to schools of all denominations to hold their festivals in. I should think that no school was ever refused the use unless the field was previously engaged. The present method of utilising the field—viz., opening it to a large but limited number of persons (by ticket) seems about the best that could be devised. Mr. Holyoake asks how poor mothers and sickly children are to gain entrance. It is well known in the neighbourhood that tickets of admission are issued annually. The days for distribution are advertised on the gates some time previous, when those desirous of using the grounds can attend, and the tickets are issued till exhausted. No sick person has any difficulty in getting admission. I do not know the number of tickets issued, but I have seen when cricket clubs were unable to find a place to pitch their stumps. If the grounds are open to the public without limitation, it seems that the only way it could be done would be by laying it out in gardens and gravelled walks, with the usual park seats ; but there is

hardly occasion for such a place since the formation of the Thames Embankment, *a long strip of which runs immediately in front of the Palace well provided with seats.* It is evident that if the grounds were open to the public in general, the space being small—about seven acres—the cricketers and other clubs would have to give up their sports, and Lambeth schools and societies would be deprived of their only meeting-place for summer gatherings.

"Yours obediently,

"T. B. ROBERTSON,

"Curate of St. Mary, Lambeth.

"December 22."

The comment of the *Times* upon this letter made it necessary to address a further communication to the editor. This comment occurred in a leader. which, referring to a letter of the Lambeth Curate, says: "Mr. Holyoake, in a letter which we published on Wednesday, asked with some vehemence, what was the value of permission accorded to cricketers and schools, to the poor children of Lambeth; but Mr. Robertson, the Curate of St. Mary's, Lambeth, answers this morning, that no poor or sick person has any difficulty in obtaining admission for purposes of recreation and health, and shows that 'Lambeth Green,' as it is called, is in fact available to a large class of the neighbouring inhabitants. There is certainly force in

Mr. Robertson's argument, that an unlimited use would defeat its own object, which is presumably to preserve the grounds as a playground. The large surrounding population would soon destroy the sylvan and park-like character of the place, and necessitate its laying out in the style of an ornamental pleasure garden, with formal walks, and turf only to be kept green by fencing."

This is the old defence of exclusive enjoyment of parks and pleasure grounds, as the people, if admitted to them, would destroy them—which they do not. Why should they destroy what they value ?

My reply to the *Times* appeared December 28, 1882 :—

" Sir,—It is the weight that you attach to the letter of the Curate of St. Mary, Lambeth, which appeared in the *Times* of Saturday, which makes it important. When I have viewed the Lambeth Palace from the railway which overlooks it and seen how completely the sheep fields are separate and apart from the Archbishop's garden, it has seemed a pity that the poor little children of Lambeth should not have the freedom and privilege of those sheep. No humane person could look into the houses of the crowded and cheerless streets which lie near the Palace walls without wishing to take the children by the hand into the Palace fields at once. Does the Rev. Mr. Robertson not understand the difference between

a ticket gate and an open gate? How are poor, busy women to watch the gates to find out when the annual tickets of admission are given? And what is the chance of those families who arrive after 'the number issued is exhausted'? If all the persons who need admissions can have them, the gates might as well be thrown open. Of course, the nine acres would not hold all the parish; but all the parish would not go at once. No statement has been made which shows that the grounds have been occupied by tickets of admission more than forty days in the year, whereas there are 365 days when little people might go in. To them one hour in that green paradise would be more than a week jostled by passengers on the Embankment watching a stone wall, for the little people could not well overlook it. But if they could, can the Curate of St. Mary really think this limited recreation a sufficient substitute for quiet fields and flowers? The Board of Works, if the grounds come into their hands, may be trusted to give school treats a chance as well as local little children.

"No one who has seen the crowds of ragged, dreary, pale-faced boys and girls rushing to the fields and flowers at Temple Gardens when the lawyers graciously open the gates to them and watched them pour out at evening through the Temple Gates into Fleet Street, leaping, laughing, and refreshed, could help thinking that it would be

a gladsome sight to see such groups issue from the Lambeth Palace gates. I never thought when sending the memorial to the Archbishop that the fields should be divested from the see or sold away from it. I believed that the late Archbishop would, as the new Archbishop may, by an act of grace accord his little neighbours free admission, or at least exchange the dead walls for palisades, so that children playing around may vary the stones of the Embankment for a sight of sheep and grass through the bars. The late Canon Kingsley asked me to visit him when he came into residence at Westminster. My intention was to ask him and the late Dean, whom I had the honour to know, to judge themselves whether the matter now in question was not practicable, and then to speak to the Archbishop about it. But death carried them both away one after the other before this opportunity could occur. My belief remains unchanged that the late Archbishop would have done what is now asked had time and the state of his health permitted him to attend to the matter himself. It would have been but an extension of the unselfish and kindly uses to which he had long permitted the grounds to be put."

From several letters I received at the time, I quote one dated Christmas Eve, 1882 :—

"Honour and thanks to you, Mr. Holyoake, for

your recent and former letters respecting Lambeth Palace field. Very much more good could be got out of it than as a place for cricketing on half-holidays and occasional school-treats, and for desolation at other times except as regards an approved few.

"There is no recreation ground in London that I look upon with so much satisfaction as a triangular inclosure of plain grass by Kennington Church, enjoyed commonly by the dirtiest and poorest children."

But a letter of a very different character appeared in the *Standard*, December 20, 1882, entitled, "The Lambeth Palace Garden":—

"SIR,—No right-minded person can fail to be deeply impressed by Mr. Holyoake's touching letter in your impression of to-day. Its sentiments are so very beautiful and its principles so exactly popular, and in such perfect accordance with the blessed Liberal maxim—'What is yours is mine and what is mine is my own,' that I myself am overcome with delight at their enunciation. The pleasure of being perfectly free and easy with other people's property, evidently becoming so sincere and abounding, and the simple manner in which such liberality can be now readily practised without any personal self-denial or inconvenience, makes the principle in action perfectly commendable, and one to be duly applied and most carefully expanded.

"With the latter view, I venture to point out that there is a very excellent library of books at Lambeth Palace, which, comparatively speaking, very few people take down or read. Do not, however, think me selfishly covetous or hankering after my neighbour's property if I venture to point out that there exist more than twenty clergymen in Lambeth, to whom a share or division of these scarcely used volumes would be a great boon. If the pictures, furniture, and cellars of wine could, at the same time, be benevolently divided, I should have no objection to receiving a share of the same under such philanthropic 're-arrangement.'—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"A Lambeth Parson.

"Lambeth, December 20."

My reply to this letter appeared in the *Standard*, December 22, 1882 :—

"Sir,—This morning I received a letter from a clergyman, who gives his name and address, and who knows Lambeth well, thanking me for the letter which I had addressed to you, as he takes great interest in the welfare of the little ones in the crowded homes around the Palace. Lest, however, I should be elated by such an unexpected, though welcome, concurrence of opinion, the same post brought me a letter to the same purport of

that signed 'A Lambeth Parson,' which appeared in the *Standard* yesterday. The letter which you printed assumes that the sheep fields of the Palace are private property, and that I propose to steal them in the name of humanity. Permit me to say that I have as much detestation as the Lambeth Parson can have for that sympathy for the people which has plunder for its motive.

"The memorial I sent to his Grace the late Archbishop asked him to give his permission for little ones to enter his grounds. We never proposed to take permission, nor assumed any right to pass the gates. There never was a doubt in my mind, that had his Grace opportunity of looking into the matter for himself, he would have granted the request, for his kindness of heart we all knew. That he gave the use of the fields to what he thought equally useful purposes showed how unselfishly he used the grounds. If the question is raised as to private property, I would do what I could to promote the purchase of it (if it can rightly be sold) by a penny subscription from the parents of the poor children and others who would chiefly benefit by it. It would be an evil day if working people could consent that their little ones should have enjoyment at the price of theft.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"George Jacob Holyoake.

"22, Essex Street, W.C., December 21."

Meanwhile an important public body had taken up the question. "The Metropolitan Public Garden, Boulevard, and Playground Association" had, through its officers, Lord Brabazon, Mr. Ernest Hart, Mr. J. Tennant, and the Rev. Sidney Vatcher, addressed the following letter to the Prime Minister:—

"Sir,—The undersigned 'members of the Metropolitan Public Garden, Boulevard, and Playground Association' desire to draw your attention to an article enclosed which recently appeared in a London daily paper, and to request that you will bring the needs of Lambeth district, as regards open spaces, to the notice of the future Primate, in the hope that his Grace may take into consideration the suggestions contained in the article, and with the co-operation of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Metropolitan Board of Works, take such steps as may seem to him most advisable for the purpose of securing in perpetuity to the poor and crowded population of Lambeth the use and enjoyment of the open space around Lambeth Palace.—We have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient and humble servants,

"Brabazon, Chairman."

Mr. Gladstone willingly gave attention to the subject, and sent the following reply:—

"10, Downing Street, Whitehall,

December 21, 1882.

"My Lord,—I am directed by Mr. Gladstone to acknowledge the receipt of the letter which was signed by your lordship and other members of the Metropolitan Public Garden, etc., Association in favour of securing for the use of the population of the neighbourhood the grounds at present attached to Lambeth Palace. I have to inform your lordship that Mr. Gladstone has already been in communication with the vestry of Lambeth on this subject, and as it appears to be one of metropolitan improvement it is not a matter in which Mr. Gladstone can take the initiative. He will, however, make known your views to the prelate designated to succeed to the Archbishopric, and should the Metropolitan Board of Works intervene Mr. Gladstone will be happy to consider the matter further.—I am, my Lord, your obedient servant,

"Horace Seymour.

"The Lord Brabazon."

Next Colonel Sir J. M'Garel Hogg, M.P., Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, had the matter before him. It was stated that the use of the nine acres of ground (of which a plan was presented) depended upon the permission of the Archbishop. The Lambeth Vestry had sent a memorial to the Queen and the Government saying that the pasture and recreation acres might be severed from the Archbishop's residence.

The following is the reply received from Mr. Gladstone :—

"10, Downing Street, Whitehall,
December 19*th.*

"Sir,—Mr. Gladstone has had the honour to receive the communication which you have made to him on behalf of the vestry of the parish of Lambeth on the subject of acquiring the grounds of Lambeth Palace as a place of public recreation. In reply I am directed to say that as far as he is able to understand this important matter it seems to be a case of metropolitan improvement, and if, as he supposes, that is the case, the proper course for the vestry to take would be to bring the case before the Metropolitan Board of Works for their consideration. In this view Mr. Gladstone is not aware that Her Majesty's Government could undertake to interfere, but he will make known this correspondence to the person who may be designated to succeed the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he will further consider the matter should the Metropolitan Board intervene. Mr. Gladstone would have been glad if the vestry had supplied him with the particulars of the case, in regard to which he has only a very general knowledge.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"E. W. Hamilton.

"The Vestry Clerk of Lambeth."

Mr. Hill gave notice of the following motion :—

"That an instruction be given to the Prime

Minister that if the proper authorities are willing to hand over the Lambeth Palace grounds for the free use of the public, this Board will accept the charge and preserve the grounds as a portion of the open spaces."

Then came a hopeless and defensive letter, before referred to, addressed both to the *Standard*, *Telegraph*, and the *Times*:—

"Sir,—Some of the statements (including a correspondence with the Prime Minister) which have, during the last few days, appeared in the newspapers with reference to Lambeth Palace grounds, would, I think, lead those who are unacquainted with the circumstances to suppose that these grounds have been hitherto altogether closed to the public, and reserved for the sole use of the Archbishop and his household. Will you, therefore, to prevent misapprehension, kindly allow me to state the facts of the case?

"For many years past the Archbishop of Canterbury endeavoured, in what seemed to him the best way, to make the grounds in question available, under certain restrictions, to the general public. During the summer months twenty-eight cricket clubs, some from the Lambeth parishes and some from other parts of London, have received permission to play cricket in the field, and similar arrangements have been made for football in the winter, though necessarily upon a smaller scale. The whole available ground has been carefully

allotted for the different hours of each day. On certain fixed occasions the field is used for rifle corps' drill and exercises, and throughout the summer, arrangements are constantly made for 'treats' for infant and other schools unable to go out of London. Tickets giving admission to the field at all hours have been issued for some years past, in very large numbers, to the sick, aged, and poor of the surrounding streets; and the whole grounds, including the private garden, have been opened without restriction to the nurses and others of St. Thomas's Hospital.

"His Grace frequently consulted those best qualified from local experience to judge what is for the advantage of the neighbourhood, and invariably found their opinion to coincide with his own—namely, that a more public opening of the ground would interfere with the useful purposes to which it is at present turned for the benefit of the neighbourhood, and that, considering the limited space, no gain could be secured by throwing it entirely open which would at all compensate for the inevitable loss of the advantages at present enjoyed.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"Randall T. Davidson.

"Lambeth Palace, December 16."

On January 6, 1883, I wrote to the *Daily News*, saying:—

"Sir,—Your columns have recorded the steps

taken by the Lambeth Vestry and by Lord Brabazon (on the part of the Open Space Society, for which he acts) with respect to the use of the pasture acres connected with the Palace grounds of Lambeth. I have been asked by a clergyman, for whose judgment I have great respect, to write some letter which shall make it plain to the public that it is not the gardens of the Palace for the use of which any one has asked, but for the nine acres of fields outside the gardens, as a small recreation ground which shall be open to the children of Lambeth, who are numerous there, and much in need of some pleasant change of that scarce and pleasant kind. No one has dined at the Lambeth Palace, or been otherwise a visitor there, without valuing the gardens which surround it and which are necessary to an episcopal residence in London. No one wishes to interfere with or curtail the garden grounds. I thought the public understood this. I shall therefore be obliged if you can insert this explanation in your columns. Much better than anything I could say upon the subject are the words which occur in the *Family Churchman* of December 27th, which gives the portraits of the new Archbishop, Dr. Benson, and the late Bishop of Llandaff. The editor says that 'every one knows the Archbishops of Canterbury have a splendid country seat at Addington, within easy driving distance of London. Within the same distance there are few parks so beautiful as Addington Palace, whilst, unlike some

parks in other parts of the country, it is jealously closed against the public. The Palace park is remarkable for its romantic dells, filled with noble trees and an undergrowth of rhododendrons. There are, moreover, within the park, heights which command fine views of the surrounding country. It is thought, perhaps not unjustly, that the new Archbishop might well be content with this country place, and, whilst retaining the gardens at Lambeth Palace, might with graceful content see conceded to the poor, whose houses throng the neighbourhood, the nine acres of pasture land.' This is very distinct and even generous testimony on the part of the *Family Churchman* to the seemliness and legitimacy of the plea put forward on the part of the little people of Lambeth.—Very faithfully yours,

"George Jacob Holyoake.

"22, Essex Street, W.C."

News of the Palace grounds agitation reached as far as Mentone, and Mr. R. Ffrench Blake, who was residing at the Hôtel Splendide, sent an interesting letter to the *Times*—historical, defensive, and suggestive. He wrote on January 3, 1883, saying:—

"Sir,—Attention having recently been drawn to the Lambeth Palace grounds and the use which the late Primate made of them for the recreation of the masses, it may be interesting, especially at this juncture, to place on record what were his views with regard to those historic parts of the buildings of the

Palace itself which are not actually used as the residence of the Archbishops. These chiefly consist of what is known as the Lollards' Tower, and the noble Gate Tower, called after its founder, Archbishop Moreton. The former of these has recently been put into repair, and rooms in it were granted to the late Bishop of Lichfield and his brother, by virtue of their connection with the Palace library."

Mr. Blake then adverts to the affair of the grounds. He says :—

"Nor can I suppose that any well-informed member of the vestry could imagine that it is in the lawful power of a Prime Minister, or even of Parliament, to alienate, without consent, any portion of the Church's inheritance. It may be a somewhat high standard of right, which is referred to in the sacred writings, to 'pay for the things which we never took,' but in no standard of right whatsoever can the motto find place to 'take the things for which we never pay.' Although the Archbishop may have deemed that he turned to the very best account the ground in question, for the purposes of enjoyment and health to the surrounding population, he was far too wise and too charitable to disregard, so far as he deemed he had the power, any petition or request which might, if granted, add to the pleasure and happiness of others, and if it had been

made clear to him as his duty, and an offer to that effect had been made to him by the Metropolitan Board of Works or others, I am satisfied he would have consented, not to the alienation of Church property, but to the sale of the field for a people's park, and the application of the value of the ground to mission purposes for South London, and such a scheme I happen to know was at one time discussed by some of those most intimately connected with him."

Afterwards, January 13, 1883, the *Pall Mall Gazette* remarked that "it is not a happy omen that the consent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners is required before the well-fed donkey who disports himself in the Palace grounds can be joined by the ill-fed, ragged urchins who now have no playground but the streets." The *Daily News* rendered further aid in a leader. Then a report was made that the condition of the streets, "to which, in his correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mr. Holyoake had called attention, had been illustrated by the fall of several miserable tenements, in which a woman and several children were fatally buried in the ruins." The writer says there is "no hope that the unkindly exclusiveness of 'Cantuar' will be broken down."

So the matter rested for nearly twenty years before the happy news came that the London County Council had come into possession of the

ecclesiastical fields, and converted them into a holy park, where pale-faced mothers and sickly children may stroll or disport themselves at will evermore. All honour to the later agents of this merciful change. There is an open gleam of Nature now in the doleful district. Sir Hudibras exclaims :

> "What perils do environ
> Him who meddles with cold iron."

Not less so if the meddlement be with ecclesiastical iron and the contest lasts a longer time.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SOCIAL WONDERS ACROSS THE WATER

Being several times in France, twice in America and Canada, thrice in Italy and as many times in Holland, under circumstances which brought me into relation with representative people, enabled me to become acquainted with the ways of persons of other countries than my own. There I met great orators, poets, statesmen, philosophers, and great preachers of whom I had read—but whom to know was a greater inspiration. Thus I learned the art of not being surprised, and of regarding strangeness as a curiosity, not an offence awakening resentment as something unpardonable, or at least, an impropriety the traveller is bound to reprehend, as Mrs. Trollope and her successors have done on American peculiarities. On the Continent I found incidents to wonder at, but I confine myself in this chapter to America and Canada, countries we are accustomed to designate as "Across the Water," as the United States and the Dominion

which have imperishable interest to all of the British race.

Notwithstanding the thousands of persons who now make sea journeys for the first time, I found, when it came to my turn, there was no book—nor is there now—on the art of being a sea passenger. I could find no teaching Handbook of the Ocean—what to expect under entirely new conditions, and what to do when they come, so as to extract out of a voyage the pleasure in it and increase the discomforts which occur in wave-life. One of the pleasures is—there is no dust at sea.

On my visit to America in 1879, I, at the request of Mr. Hodgson Pratt, undertook to inquire what were the prospects of emigrants to that country and Canada, which cost me labour and expense. What I found wanting, and did not exist, and which does not exist still, was an emigrant guide book informing him of the conditions of industry in different States, the rules of health necessary to be observed in different climates, and the vicissitudes to which health is liable. The book wanted is one on an epitome plan of the People's Blue Books, issued by Lord Clarendon on my suggestion, as he stated in them.

When I was at Washington, Mr. Evarts, the Secretary of State, gave me a book, published by local authorities at Washington, with maps of every department of the city, marking the portion where special diseases prevailed. London has no such

book yet. Similar information concerning every State and territory in America existed in official reports. But I found that neither the Government of Washington nor Ottawa would take the responsibility of giving emigrants this information in a public and portable form, as land agents would be in revolt at the preferential choice emigrants would then have before them. It was continually denied that such information existed. Senators in their turn said so. Possibly they did not know, but Mr. Henry Villard, a son-in-law of Lloyd Garrison, told me that when he was secretary of the Social Science Association he began the kind of book I sought, and that its issue was discouraged.

On my second visit to America in 1882, I had introductions to the President of the United States and to Lord Lorne, the Governor of Canada, from his father, the Duke of Argyll, with a view of obtaining the publication of a protecting guide book such as I have described, under its authority. When I first mentioned this in New York (1879) the editor of the *Star* (an Irishman) wrote friendly and applauding leaders upon my project. On my second visit, in 1882, this friendly editor (having seen in the papers that Mr. Gladstone approved of my quest) wrote furious leaders against it. On asking him the reason of the change of view, he said, "Mr. Holyoake, were Mr. Gladstone and his Cabinet in this room, and I could open a trap-door

under their feet and let them all fall into hell, I would do it," using words still more venomous. Then I realised the fatuity of the anti-Irish policy which drives the ablest Irishmen into exile and maintains a body of unappeasable enemies of England wherever they go. Then I saw what crazy statesmanship it was in the English to deny self-government to the Irish people, and spend ten millions a year to prevent them taking care of themselves.

The Irish learned to think better of Mr. Gladstone some years later. One night when he was sitting alone in the House of Commons writing his usual letter to the Queen, after debates were over, he was startled by a ringing cheer that filled the chamber, when looking up he found the Irish members, who had returned to express their gratitude to him. Surely no nation ever proclaimed its obligation in so romantic a way. The tenderest prayer put up in my time was that of W. D. Sullivan :—

> "*God be good to Gladdy,*
> Says Sandy, John and Paddy,
> For he is a noble laddy,
> A grand old chiel is he."

I take pride in the thought that I was the first person who lectured upon "English Co-operation" in Montreal and Boston. It was with pride I spoke in Stacey Hall in Boston, from the desk at which Lloyd Garrison was once speaking, when he was seized by a slave-owning mob with intent

to hang him. As I spoke I could look into the stairway on my right, down which he was dragged.

The interviewers, the terror of most "strangers," were welcome to me. The engraving in Frank Leslie's paper reproduced in "Among the Americans," representing the interview with me in the Hoffman House, was probably the first picture of that process published in England (1881). I advocated the cultivation of the art in Great Britain, which, though prevalent in America, was still in a crude state there. The questions put to me were poor, abrupt, containing no adequate suggestion of the information sought. The interviewer should have some conception of the knowledge of the person questioned, and skill in reporting his answers. Some whom I met put down the very opposite of what was said to them. The only protection against such perverters, when they came again, was to say the contrary to what I meant, when their rendering would be what I wished it to be. Some interviewers put into your mouth what they desired you to say. Against them there is no remedy save avoidance. On the whole, I found interviewers a great advantage. I had certain ideas to make known and information to ask for, and the skilful interviewer, in his alluring way, sends everything all over the land. Wise questioning is the fine art of daily life. "It is misunderstanding," says the Dutch proverb, "which brings lies to town." Everybody knows

that misunderstandings create divisions in familie and alienations in friendships—in parties as well as in persons — which timely inquiries would dissipate. Intelligent questioning elicits hidden facts—it increases knowledge without ostentation —it clears away obscurity, and renders information definite—it supersedes assumptions—it tests suspicions and throws light upon conjecture—it undermines error, without incensing those who hold it—it leads misconception to confute itself without the affront of direct refutation—it warns inquirers not to give absolute assent to anything uncorroborated, or which cannot be interrogated. Relevant questioning is the handmaid of accuracy, and makes straight the pathway of Truth.

The privations of Protection, which a quick and independent-minded people endured, was one of the wonders I saw. In Montreal, for a writing pad to use on my voyage home, I had to pay seven shillings and sixpence, which I could have bought in London for eighteen-pence. I took to America a noble, full-length portrait of John Bright, just as he stood when addressing the House of Commons, more than half life-size—the greatest of Mayall's triumphs. Though it was not for sale, but a present to my friend, James Charlton, of Chicago, the well-known railway agent, the Custom House demanded a payment of 30 dols. (£6) import duty. It was only after much negotiations in high quarters, and in consideration that it

was a portrait of Mr. Bright, brought as a gift to an American citizen, that the import duty was reduced to 6 dollars.

The disadvantage of Protection is that no one can make a gift to America or to its citizens without being heavily taxed to discourage international generosity.

The Mayor of Brighton, Mr. Alderman Hallet, had entrusted to me some 200 volumes, of considerable value, on City Sanitation, greatly needed in America. They lay in the Custom House three months, before I discovered that the Smithsonian Institute could claim them under its charter. Otherwise I must have paid a return freight to Brighton, as America is protected from accepting offerings of civil or sanitary service. There often come to us, from that country, emissaries of Evangelism, to improve us in piety, but at home they levy 25 per cent. upon the importation of the Holy Scriptures—thus taxing the very means of Salvation.

For a time I sent presents of books to working-class friends in America whom I wished to serve or to interest, who wrote to me to say that "they were unable to redeem them from the post-office, the import tax being more than they could pay," and they reminded me that "having been in America, I ought to know that working people could not afford to have imported presents made to them." Indeed, I had often noticed how destitute their homes were in

matters of table service and all bright decoration, plentiful even in the houses of our miners and mechanics in England. American workmen would tell me that a present of cutlery or porcelain, if I could bring that about, would interest them greatly.

On leaving New York a friend of mine, a Custom House officer, told me he needed a coast coat, suitable to the service he was engaged in, and that he would be much obliged if I would have one made for him in England. He would leave it to me to contrive how it could reach him. The coat he wanted, he said, would cost him £9 in New York. I had it made in London, entirely to his satisfaction, for £4 15s., but how to get it to him free of Custom duties was a problem. I had to wait until a friend of mine—a property owner in Montreal—was returning there. He went out in the vessel in which Princess Louise sailed. He wore it occasionally on deck to qualify it being regarded as a personal garment. So it arrived duty free at Montreal. After looking about for two or three months for a friend who would wear it across the frontier, it arrived, after six months' travelling diplomacy, at the house of my friend in New York.

I did not find in America or Canada anything more wonderful, beggarly and humiliating than the policy of Protection. But we are not without counterparts in folly of another kind.

Visitors to England no doubt wonder to find us,

a commercial nation, fining the merchant of enterprise a shilling (the workman was so fined until late years) for every pound he expends on journeys of business—keeping a travelling tax to discourage trade. But John Bull does not profess to be over-bright, while Uncle Sam thinks himself the smartest man in creation. We retain in 1904 a tax Peel condemned in 1844. But then we live under a monarchy, from which Uncle Sam is free.

France used to be the one land which was hospitable to new ideas, and for that it is still pre-eminent in Europe. But America excels Europe now in this respect. Canada has not emerged from its Colonialism, and has no national aspiration. Voltaire found when he was in London, that England had fifty religions and only one sauce. America has no distinction in sauces, but it has more than 200 religions, and having no State Church there is no poison of Social Ascendency in piety, but equality in worship and prophesying. I found that a man might be of any religion he pleased—though as a matter of civility he was expected to be of some—and if he said he was of none, he was thought to be phenomenally fastidious, if not one of theirs would suit him, since America provided a greater variety for the visitor to choose from than any other country in the world.

Though naturally disappointed at being unable

to suit the stranger's taste, they were not intolerant. He was at liberty to import or invent a religion of his own. Let not the reader imagine that because people are free to believe as they please, there is no religion in America.

Nearing Santa Fé in New Mexico, I passed by the adobe temple of Montezuma. Adobe is pronounced in three syllables—a-dò-be—and is the Mexican name for a mud-built house, which is usually one story high; so that Santa Fé has been compared to a town blown down. When the Emperor Montezuma perished he told his followers to keep the fire burning in the Temple, as he would come again from the east, and they should see "his face bright and fair." In warfare and pestilence and decimation of their race, these faithful worshippers kept the fire burning night and day for three centuries, and it has not long been extinguished. Europe can show no faith so patient, enduring, and pathetic as this.

The pleasantest hours of exploration I spent in Santa Fé were in the old church of San Miguel. Though the oldest church in America, there are those who would remove rather than restore it. A book lay upon an altar in which all who would subscribe to save it had inserted their names, and I added mine for five shillings.

When an Englishman goes abroad, he takes with him a greater load of prejudices than any man of any other nation could bear, and, as a rule, he

expresses pretty freely his opinion of things which do not conform to his notions, as though the inhabitants ought to have consulted his preferences, forgetting that in his own country he seldom shows that consideration to others. On fit occasion I did not withhold my opinion of things which seemed to me capable of improvement; but before giving my impressions I thought over what equivalent absurdity existed in England, and by comparing British instances with those before me, no one took offence—some were instructed or amused at finding that hardly any nation enjoyed a monopoly of stupidity. There is all the difference in the world between saying to an international host, "How badly you do things in your country," and saying, "We are as unsuccessful as you in 'striking twelve all at once.'"

We all know the maxim: "Before finding fault with another, think of your own." But Charles Dickens, with all his brightness, forgot this when he wrote of America. Few nations have as yet attained perfection in all things—not even England.

When in Boston, America, 1879, I went to the best Bible store I could find or be directed to, to purchase a copy of the apocryphal books of the Old Testament. In a church where I had to make a discourse, I wanted to read the dialogue between the prophet Esdras and the angel Uriel. The only copy I could obtain was on poor, thin paper; of

small, almost invisible print, and meanly bound. The price was 4s. 2d. "How is it," I inquired, "that you ask so much in the Hub of the Universe for even this indifferent portion of Scripture—seeing that at the house of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, in Northumberland Avenue, London, a house ten times handsomer than yours, in a much more costly situation—I can buy the same book on good, strong paper, in large type, in a bright, substantial cover for exactly 3s. less than you ask me." "You see, sir," said the manager of the store, "we have duty to pay." "Duty!" I exclaimed. "Do you mean me to understand that in this land of Puritan Christians, you tax the means of salvation?" He did not like to admit that, and could not deny it, so after a confused moment he answered: "All books imported have to pay twenty-five per cent. duty." All I could say was that "it seemed to me that their protective duties protected sin; and, being interested in the welfare of emigrants, I must make a note counselling all who wish to be converted, to get that done before coming out; for if they arrive in America in an unconverted state they could not afford to be converted here." Until then I was unaware that Protection protected the Devil, and that he had a personal interest in its enactment.

My article in the *Nineteenth Century* entitled, "A Stranger in America," written in the uncarping spirit as to defects and ungrudgingly recognising the

circumstances which frustrated or retarded other excellences in their power, was acknowledged by the press of that country, and was said by G. W. Smalley — the greatest American critic in this country then—to be "one of those articles which create international goodwill." Approval worth having could no further go. It was surprising to me that mere two-sided travelling fairness should meet with such assent, whereas I expected it would be regarded as tame and uninteresting.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH AT SEA

THE voyage out to America described in the last chapter included an instance of the extraordinary behaviour of the Established Church at sea, which deserves special mention as it is still repeated.

There is an offensive rule on board ships that the service on Sunday shall be that of the Church of England, and that the preacher selected shall be of that persuasion.

Several of the twelve ministers of religion among the passengers of the *Bothnia* in 1879 were distinguished preachers, whereas the clergyman selected to preach to us was not at all distinguished, and made a sermon which I, as an Englishman, was ashamed to hear delivered before an audience of intelligent Americans. The preacher told a woful story of loss of trade and distress in England, which gave the audience the idea that John Bull was "up a tree." Were he up ever so high I would not have told it to an alien audience.

The preacher said that these losses were owing to our sins—that is the sins of Englishmen. The devotion of the American hearers was varied with a smile at this announcement. It was their surpassing ingenuity and rivalry in trade which had affected our exports for a time. Our chief "sins" were uninventiveness and commercial incapacity, and the greater wit and ingenuity of the audience were the actual punishment the preacher was pleading against, and praying them to be contrite on account of their own success. The minister described bad trade as a punishment from God, as though God had made the rascally merchants who took out shoddy calico and ruined the markets. It was not God that had driven the best French and German artists and workmen into America, where they have enriched its manufacturers with their skill and industry, and enabled that country to compete with ours.

The preacher's text was as wide of any mark as his sermon. It asked the question, "How can we sing in a strange land?" When we should arrive there, there would hardly be a dozen of us in the vessel who would be in a strange land; the great majority were going home—mostly commercial reapers of an English harvest who were returning home rejoicing—bearing their golden sheaves with them. Neither the sea nor the land were strange to them. Many of them were as familiar with the Atlantic as with the prairie. I sat at table by a

Toronto dealer who had crossed the ocean twenty-nine times. The congregation at sea formed a very poor opinion of the discernment of the Established Church.

On the return voyage in the *Gallia* we had another "burning" but not "a shining light" of the Church of England to discourse. He was a young man, and it required some assurance on his part to look into the eyes of the intelligent Christians around him, who had three times his years, experience, and knowledge, and lecture them upon matters of which he was absolutely ignorant.

This clergyman enforced the old doctrine of severity in parental discipline of the young, and on the wisdom of compelling children to unquestioning obedience, and argued that submission to a higher will was good for men during life. At least two-thirds of the congregation were American, who regard parental severity as cruelty to the young, and utterly uninstructive; and unquestioning obedience they hold to be calamitous and demoralising education. They expect reasonable obedience, and seek to obtain it by reason. Submission to a "higher will" as applied to man, is submission to arbitrary authority against which the whole polity of American life is a magnificent protest. The only higher will they recognise in worldly affairs is the will of the people, intelligently formed, impartially gathered, and constitutionally

recorded—facts of which the speaker had not the remotest idea.

Who can read this narrative of the ignorance and effrontery, nurtured by the Established Church and obtruded on passengers at sea, without a sense of patriotic humiliation that it is continued every Sunday in every ship? It is thought dangerous to be wrecked and not to have taken part in this pitiable exhibition.

CHAPTER XXXV

ADVENTURES IN THE STREETS

WERE I persuaded, as many are, that each person is a subject of Providential care, I might count myself as one of the well-favoured. I should do so, did it not demand unseemly egotism to believe the Supreme Master of all the worlds of the Universe gave a portion of His eternal time to personally guide my unimportant footsteps, or snatch me from harm, which might befall me on doing my duty, or when I inadvertently, negligently, or ignorantly put myself in the way of disaster. Whatever may be the explanation, I have oft been saved in jeopardy.

The first specific deliverance occurred when I was a young man, in the Baskeville Mill, Birmingham. Working at a button lathe, the kerchief round my neck was caught by the "chock," and I saw myself drawn swiftly to it. To avert being strangled, I held back my neck with what force I could. All would have been in vain had not a friendly Irishman, who was grinding spectacle

glasses in an adjoining room, come to my assistance, by which I escaped decapitation without benefit of the clergy, or the merciful swiftness of the guillotine.

In days when the cheap train ran very early in the morning, I set out before daylight from Exeter, where I had been lecturing. At the station at which the train stopped for an hour or two, as was the custom in days before the repeal of the tax on third-class passengers, we were in what Omar Khayyám called the "false dawn of morning." The train did not properly draw up to the platform, and when I stepped out I had a considerable fall, which sprained my ankle and went near breaking my neck.

On my arrival in Boston, 1879, I was invited by a newspaper friend, whom I had brought with me into the city, to join a party of pressmen who were to assemble next morning at Parker House, to report upon the test ascent of a new elevator. It happened that Mr. Wendell Phillips visited me early at Adam's House, before I was up. He sat familiarly on the bedrail, and proposed to drive me round the city and show me the historic glories of Boston, which being proud to accept, I sent an apology for my absence to the elevator party at Parker House. That morning the elevator broke down, and out of five pressmen who went into it only four were rescued—more or less in a state of pulp. One was killed. But for Mr. Phillips's fortunate visit I should have been among them.

In Kansas City, in the same year (1879), I was taken by my transatlantic friend, Mr. James Charlton, to see a sugar bakery, concerning which I was curious. The day was hot enough to singe the beard of Satan, and I was glad to retreat into the bakery, which, however, I found still hotter, and I left, intending to return at a cooler hour next morning. At the time I was to arrive I heard that the whole building had fallen in. Some were killed and many injured. This was the City of Kansas, of which the mayor once said: "He wished the people would let some one die a natural death, that a stranger might know how healthy the city was. Accidents, duels, and shootings prevented cases of longevity occurring."

Another occasion when misadventure took place, when we—my daughter, Mrs. Marsh, and I—were crossing the Tesuque Valley, below Santa Fé, the party occupied three carriages; road, there was none, and the horses knew it, and when they came to a difficulty—either a ravine or hill—the driver would give the horses the rein, when they spread themselves out with good sagacity, and descended or ascended with success. One pair of horses broke the spring of their carriage, making matters unpleasant to the occupants; another pair broke the shaft, which, cutting them, made them mad, and they ran away. The carriage in which I was remained sound, and I had the pleasure for once of watching the misfortunes of my friends.

The river was low, the sand was soft, and the distance through the Tesuque River was considerable, and we calculated that no horses were mad enough to continue their efforts to run through it, and we were rewarded by seeing them alter their minds in the midst of it, and continue their journey in a sensible manner.

Returning from Guelph, which lies below Hamilton, in the Niagara corner of Canada, where we had been to see the famous Agricultural College, we were one night on the railway in what the Scotch call the "gloaming." My daughter remarked that the scenery outside the carriage was more fixed than she had before observed it, and upon inquiry it appeared that we were fixed too—for the train had parted in the middle, and the movable portion had gone peacefully on its way to Hamilton. We were left forming an excellent obstruction to any other train which might come down the line. Fortunately, the guard could see the last station we had left, two miles from us, and see also the train following us arrive there. We hoped that the stationmaster would have some knowledge of our being upon the line, and stop the advancing train; but when we saw it leave the station on its way to us we were all ordered to leave the carriages, which was no easy thing, as the banks right and left of us were steep, and the ditch at the base was deep. However, our friends, Mr. Littlehales and Mr. Smith, being strong of

arm and active on a hill, very soon drew us up to a point where we could observe a collision with more satisfaction than when in the carriages. Fortunately, the man who bore the only lamp left us, and who was sent on to intercept the train, succeeded in doing it. Ultimately we arrived at Hamilton only two hours late. When we were all safely at home, one lady, who accompanied us, fainted —which showed admirable judgment to postpone that necessary operation until it was no longer an inconvenience. One lady fainted in the midst of the trouble, which only increased it. The excitement made fainting sooner or later justifiable, although an impediment, but I was glad to observe my daughter did not think it necessary to faint at any time.

As we were leaving the sleepy Falls of Montmorency in the carriage, we looked out to see whether the Frenchman had got sight of us, fully expecting he would take a chaise and come after us to collect some other impost which we had evaded paying. The sun was in great force, and I was reposing in its delicious rays, thinking how delightful it was to ride into Quebec on such a day, when in an instant of time we were all dispersed about the road. In a field hard by, where a great load of lumber as high as a house was piled, a boy who was extracting a log set the upper logs rolling. This frightened the horses. They were two black steeds of high spirit, and therefore very mad when

alarmed. Had they run on in their uncontrollable state, they would, if they escaped vehicles on the way, have arrived at a narrow bridge where unknown mischief must have occurred. The driver, who was a strongly built Irishman, about sixty, with good judgment and intrepidity, instantly threw the horses on to the fence, which they broke, got into the ditch, and seriously cut their knees. I leaped out into the ditch with a view to help my daughter out of the carriage; but she, nimbler than I, intending to render me the same service, arrived at the ditch, and assisted me out, merely asking "whether four quietly disposed persons being distributed over the Dominion at a minute's notice was a mode of travelling in Canada?" Mrs. Hall, who was riding with us, also escaped unhurt. Her husband deliberately remained some time to see what the horses were going to do, but finding them frantic, he also abandoned the carriage.

Later, in England, being Ashton way, I paid a visit to my friend the Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens, whose voice, in early Chartist times, was the most eloquent in the two counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire. He fought the "New Poor Law" and the "Long Timers" in the Ten Hours' agitation. His views were changed in many respects, but that did not alter my regard for his Chartist services—and there remained his varied affluence of language, his fitly chosen terms, his humorous statement, his exactness of expression and strong coherence, in

which the sequence of his reasoning never disappeared through the crevice of a sentence. All this made his conversation always charming and instructive.

After lecturing in the Temperance Hall and the "evening was far spent," a cab was procured to take me to Mr. Stephens's at the "Hollins." A friend, Mr. Scott, in perfect wanton courtesy, having no presentiment in his mind, would accompany me. When we arrived at Stalybridge (where there is a real bridge), the cabman, instead of driving over it, drove against it. I thought, perhaps, this was the way with Ashton cabmen; but my friend came to a different conclusion. He said the cabman had not taken the "pledge" that afternoon. I was told Ashton cabmen needed to take it often. The driver, resenting our remonstrance, drove wildly down a narrow, ugly, deserted street, which he found at hand. It was all the same to me, who did not know one street from the other. My friend, who knew there was no outlet save into the river, called out violently to cabby to stop. The only effect was that he drove more furiously. Mr. Scott leaped out and seized the horse, and prevented my being overthrown. Before us were the remains of an old building, with the cellars all open, in one of which we should soon have descended. Cabby would have killed his horse, and probably himself, which no doubt would have been an advantage to Ashton.

As the place was deserted I should have been found next morning curled up and inarticulate. We paid our dangerous driver his full fare to that spot, and advised him to put himself in communication with a temperance society. He abused us as "not being gentlemen" for stopping his cab in that unhandsome way.

The next morning I went to the scene of the previous night's adventure. Had Mr. Henley, the loud, coarse-tongued member for Oxfordshire at that time, seen the place, he would have said we were making an "ugly rush" for the river. Not that we should ever have reached the river, for we should certainly have broken our necks in the brick vaults our driver was whipping his horse into.

As I needed another cab on my arrival at Euston, I selected a quiet-looking white horse, and a Good Templar-looking cabman, first asking the superintendent what he thought of him. "O, he's all right," was the answer, and things went pleasantly until we arrived at a narrow, winding street. I was thinking of my friend, Mr. Stephens, and of the concert which at that hour he had daily in his bedroom, when I was suddenly jerked off my seat and found the white horse on the foot-pavement. I stepped out and adjured the cabman, "By the carpet-bag of St. Peter" (no more suitable adjuration presented itself on the occasion), to tell me what he was at. I said,

"Are you from Ashton?" "Nothing the matter, sir. All right. Jump in. Only my horse shied at the costermonger's carrot-cart there. She's a capital horse, only she's apt to shy." I answered, "Yes; and unless I change my mode of travelling by cabs, I shall become shy myself."

Late one night, after the close of the Festive Co-operative Meeting in Huddersfield, a cab was fetched for me from the fair—it being fair time. The messenger knew it was a bad night for the whip, as he might be "touched in the head" by the festivities, so he said to cabby: "Now, though it is fair night, you must do the fair thing by this fare. He does not mind spreading principles, but he objects to being spread himself." Cabby came with alacrity. He thought he had to take some "boozing cuss" about the fair, with an occasional pull up at the "Spread Eagle." When he found me issuing from a temperance hotel, bound for Fernbrook, he did not conceal his disappointment by tongue or whip, and jerked his horse like a Bashi-Bazouk when a Montenegrin is after him. I cared nothing, as I had made up my mind not to say another word about cabs if they broke my neck. I knew we had a stout hill before us, which would bring things quiet. The next day the hotel people, who saw the cabman's rage, said they thought there was mischief in store for me. They knew nothing of Ashton ways, and their apprehensions were original.

After a pleasant sojourn in Brighton, where the November sun is bright, and the fogs are thin, grey and graceful, softening the glare of the white coast, tempering it to the sensitive sight, I returned to London one cold, frosty day, when snow and ice made the streets slippery. I had chosen a cabman whose solid, honest face was assuring, and being lumpy and large himself I thought he would keep his "four-wheeler" steady by his own weight. Being himself lame and rheumatic, he appeared one who would prefer quiet driving for his own sake. We went on steadily until we reached Pall Mall, when he turned sharply up Suffolk Street. Looking out, I called to my friend on the box, saying, "This is not Essex Street." "Beg your pardon, sir, I thought you said Suffolk Street," and began to turn his horse round. In that street the ground rises, and the carriage-way is convex and narrow, it required skill to turn the cab, and the cabman was wanting therein. He said his rein had caught, and when he thought he was pulling the horse round, the horse had taken a different view of his intention, and imagined he was backing him, and, giving me the benefit of the doubt, did back, and overturned the cab, and me too. Not liking collisions of late, I had, on leaving Brighton, wrapped myself in a railway cloak, that it might act as a sort of buffer in case of bumping —yet not expecting I should require it so soon.

Seeing what the horse was at, and taking what survey I could of the situation, I found I was being driven against the window of the house in which Cobden died. I have my own taste as to the mode in which I should like to be killed. To be run over by a butcher's cart, or smashed by a coal train or brewer's van is not my choice; but being killed in Pall Mall is more eligible, yet not satisfactory.

As I had long lived in Pall Mall, I knew the habits of the place. There is a gradation of killing in the streets of London, well-known to West-end cabmen. As they enter Trafalgar Square, they run over the passenger without ceremony. At Waterloo Place, where gentlemen wander about, they merely knock you down, but as they enter Club-land, which begins at Pall Mall West, where Judges and Cabinet Ministers and members of Parliament abound, they merely run at you; so I knew I was on the spot where death is never inflicted. Therefore I took hold of the strap on the opposite side of the cab to that on which I saw I should fall. For better being able to look after my portmanteau, I had it with me, and, fortunately had placed it on the side on which I fell. Placing myself against it when the crash came, and the glass broke, I was saved from my face being cut by it. My hat was crushed, and head bruised. It was impossible to open the door, which was then above me, and had the horse

taken to kicking, as is the manner of these animals when in doubt, it would have fared ill with me. Possibly the horse was a member of the Peace Society, and showed no belligerent tendency ; more likely he was tired, and glad of the opportunity of resting himself. The street, which seemed empty, was quickly filled, as though people sprang out of the ground. Two Micawbers who were looking out for anything which "turned up," or turned over, came and forced open the cab-door at the top, and dragged me up, somewhat dazed, my hat off, my grey hair dishevelled, my blue spectacles rather awry on my face—I was sensible of a newly-contrived, music-hall appearance as my shoulders peered above the cab. A spirit merchant near kindly invited me into his house, where some cold brandy and water given to me seemed more agreeable and refreshing than it ever did before or since. The cab had been pulled together somehow. My rheumatic friend on the box had been picked up not much the worse—possibly the fall had done his rheumatism good. I thought it a pity the poor fellow should lose his fare as well as his windows, and so continued my journey with him.

On one occasion, after an enchanted evening in the suburbs of Kensington, a fog came on. The driver of the voiture drove into an enclosure of stables, and went round and round. Noticing there was a recurring recess, I kept the door open until we arrived at it again, and leapt into it as we passed

again. When the driver, who was bewildered, came round a third time, I surprised him by shouts, and advised him to let his horse take us out by the way he came in. There was no house, or light, or person to be seen, and there was the prospect of a night in the cold, tempered by contingent accident.

Having engaged to be surety for the son of a Hindoo judge, who was about to enter as a student in the Inns of Court, a new adventure befel me. I had accepted from his father the appointment of guardian of his son. My ward was a young man of many virtues, save that of punctuality. As he did not appear by appointment, I set out in search of him. Crossing Trafalgar Square I found myself suddenly confronted by two horses' heads. An omnibus had come down upon me. It flashed through my mind that, as I had often said, I was in more danger of being killed in the streets of London than in any foreign city or on the sea; and I concluded the occasion had come. I knew no more until I found myself lying on my back in the mud after rain, but, seeing an aperture between the two wheels, I made an attempt to crawl through. A crowd of spectators had gathered round and voices shouted to me to remain where I was until the wheels were drawn from me. Lying down in the mud again was new to me. There was nothing over me but the omnibus, and as I had never seen the bottom of one before, I examined it.

It happened that a surgeon of the Humane Society was among the spectators, who assisted in raising me up, and took me to the society's rooms close by, where I was bathed and vaseline applied to my bruises. My overcoat was torn and spoiled, but I was not much hurt. The hoof of one horse had made black part of one arm. It appears I had fallen between them, and had it not been for their intelligent discrimination I might have been killed. I sent two bags of the fattest feeding cake the Co-operative Agricultural Association could supply, as a present to those two horses. I had no other means of showing my gratitude to them. I was not so grateful to the Humane Society's surgeon, who sent me in a bill for two guineas for attendance upon me, and threatened me with legal proceedings if I did not pay it. As he accompanied me to the National Liberal Club, whence I had set out, I sent him one guinea for that courtesy, and heard no more of him, and did not want to.

One evening, after leaving a Co-operative Board Meeting in Leman Street, Whitechapel, I incautiously stepped into the roadway to hail a cab, when a lurry came round a corner behind me and knocked me into the mud, which was very prevalent that day. Some bystanders picked me up, and one, good-naturedly, lent me a handkerchief with which to clear my face and head, both being blackened and bleeding. The policeman who took charge of me asked me where I wanted to be taken. I

answered that I was on my way to Fleet Street to an assembly of the Institute of Journalists to meet M. Zola, then on a visit to us. "I think, sir," said the reflective policeman, "we had better take you to the London Hospital," and another policeman accompanied me in a passing tram, which went by the hospital door. After some dreary waiting in the accident ward it was found that I had no rib or bone broken, but my nose and forehead were bound up with grim-looking plasters, and when I arrived at the hotel, four miles away, where I was residing, and entered the commercial room, I had the appearance of a prize-fighter, who had had a bad time of it in the ring. Knowing the second day of an accident was usually the worst, I took an early train home while I could move. My ribs, though not broken, were all painful, and I remember squealing for a fortnight on being taken out of bed. After my last adventure the Accident Insurance Company (though I had never troubled them but once) refused to accept any further premium from me, which I had paid twenty or thirty years, and left me to deal with further providential escapes from my own resources.

Thinking I was safe in Brighton near my own home, I was walking up the Marine Parade, one quiet Sunday morning, when a gentleman on a bicycle rushed down a bye street and knocked me down with a bound. Seeing two ladies crossing the street I concluded matters were safe. The rider

told me that he had seen the ladies and had arranged to clear them, but as I stepped forward he could not clear me, so gave me the preference. As I had always been in favour of the rights of women, I said he did rightly, though the result was not to my mind. He had the courtesy to accompany me to my door, apologising for what he had done, but left me to pay the bill of the physician, who was called in to examine me. When I recovered my proper senses I found he had not left his card. Though I advertised for him, he made no re-appearance.

Another serene Sunday morning I was crossing the Old Steine with a son-in-law; nothing was to be seen in motion save a small dog-cart, which had passed before we stepped into the road. Soon we found ourselves both thrown to the ground with violence. A huge dog, as large as the "Hound of the Baskervilles" described by Conan Doyle, had loitered behind and suddenly discovered his master had driven ahead, and he, like a Leming rat, made straight for his master, quite regardless of our being in his way.

In these and other adventures or *mis*-adventures, I need not say I was never killed, though the escapes were narrow. To say they were providential escapes would be to come under the rebuke of Archbishop Whately, who, when a curate reported himself as providentially saved from the terrible wreck of the *Amazon*, asked: "Am I to

understand that all less fortunate passengers were providentially drowned?" The belief that the Deity is capricious or partial in His mercies is a form of holy egotism which better deserves indictment than many errors of speech which have been so visited. I have no theory of my many exemptions from fatal consequences. All I can say is that, had I been a saint, I could not have been more fortunate.

CHAPTER XXXVI

LIMPING THRIFT

THRIFT is so excellent a thing—is so much praised by moralists, so much commended by advisers of the people, and is of so much value to the poor who practise it—that it is strange to see it retarded by the caprices of those who take credit and receive it, for promoting the necessary virtues. Insurance societies continue to recommend themselves by praising prudence and forethought which provides for the future. Everybody knows that those who do not live within their income live upon others who trust them. Those who spend all their income forget that if others did as they do, there would be universal indigence. Insurance companies are supposed to provide inducements to thrift, whereas they put wanton obstacles in its way.

He who takes out a policy on his life finds it a condition that if he commits suicide his policy will be forfeited—the assumption of insurance offices being that if a man insures his life he intends to cut

his throat. Can this be true? What warrant of experience is there for this expectation? Is not the natural, the instinctive, the universal love of life security sufficient against self-slaughter? If life be threatened, do not the most thoughtless persons make desperate effort to preserve it? Is it necessary for insurance societies to come forward to supplement incentives of nature? Is not the fact that a man is provident-minded enough to think of insuring his life, proof enough that his object is to live?

Answers to a series of questions are demanded from an insurer, which average persons do not possess the knowledge to answer with exactitude; yet failure in any fact or detail renders the policy void, although a person has paid premiums upon it for thirty or forty years.

Elaborate legal statements which few can understand are attached to a policy which intimidates those who see them, from wishing to incur such unfathomable obligation. A few plain words in plain type would be sufficient for the guidance of the insured and the protection of the company. The uncertainty comes from permitting questions of popular interest to be stated by a member of the legal profession. If the terms of eternal salvation had been drawn up by a lawyer, not a single soul would be saveable, and the judgment day would be involved in everlasting litigation.

An office known to me had judges among its directors, from which it was inferred by the insured that the office was straight. The holder of a policy in it, making a will, his solicitor on inquiry found that the office did not admit his birth. They had received premiums for forty years, still reserving this point for possible dispute after the policy-holder was dead, never informing him of it. When the insurance was effected, they saw the holder of it and could judge his age to a year. They saw the certificate of his birth, but gave him no assurance that they admitted it and it had to be presented again.

In another case within my knowledge, the owner of a policy obtained a loan upon it, from a well-known lawyer in the City of London, who gave the office, as is usual, notice of it. When the loan was repaid he again wrote to the office saying he had executed a deed of release of his claim on the policy. That the office was not satisfied with this assurance was never communicated to the policy-holder, and when many years later, the lawyer who advanced the loan was dead, and his son who succeeded him was dead, it transpired that the office did not believe the assurances they had received. They admitted having received the letter by the loan maker, but required to see the deeds relating to the advance and release and re-payment of the loan ; and they gave the policy-holder to understand that he had better keep those

deeds, as his executors might be required to produce them at his death. It was a miracle they were not destroyed. As the office had been legally notified that the claim on the policy had ceased, it was never imagined that deeds which did not relate to the office could be required by it. Under this intimidation the deeds have now been kept. They are fifty years old. This Scotland Yard practice of treating an insurer as a thief, detracts from the fascination of thrift.

Another instance was that of a policy-holder who applied to the office for a loan, for which 1 per cent. more interest was demanded than his banker asked, and a rise of 1 per cent. in case of delay in paying the interest, and a charge was to be made for the office lawyer investigating the validity of their own policy, upon which the office had received premiums for forty-seven years.

Directors, like the Doge of Venice, should have a lion's mouth open, of which they have the key, when they might hear of things done in their name, not conducive to the extension of thrift.

No wonder thrift goes limping along, from walking in the jagged pathway which leads to some insurance office.

There are, as I know, offices straightforward and courteous, who foster thrift by making it pleasant. Yet, as one who has often advocated thrift, I think it useful to record my astonishment

at the official impediments to its popularity, which I have encountered. This is one reason why Thrift, the most self-respecting of all the goddesses that should be swift-footed, goes limping along.

CHAPTER XXXVII

MISTRUST OF MODERATION

TEMPERANCE is restraint in use. Abstinence is entire avoidance, which is the wise policy of those who lack the strength of temperance.

How necessary entire abstinence is to many, I well know. When the drink passion sets in, it leads to an open grave. The drinker sees it, and knows it, and, with open eyes walks into it. He who realises the danger, would, as Charles Lamb said—

> "Clench his teeth and ne'er undo them,
> To let the deep damnation trickle through them."

For such there is no salvation save entire abstinence. Thousands might have been saved but for the fanaticism of abstinence advocates who opposed in Parliament every legal mitigation of the evil, thinking the spectacle of it would force the legislature into prohibition. In discussions, lectures, articles, I advocated the policy of mitigation, and supported measures in Parliament calculated

to that end, encountering thereby the strong dissent of temperance writers who, not intending it, connived at drunkenness as a temperance policy.

Is it true that moderation is dead? Have teetotalers extinguished it as a rule of daily life? Bishop Hall, in his fine way, said, "Moderation was the silken string running through the pearl chain of all our virtues." Was this a mistake of the illustrious prelate? Is not temperance a wider virtue than total abstinence? Is there no possibility of establishing temperance in betting? Can no limitation be imposed on betting? The public know denunciatory preaching does not arrest it. Innumerable articles are written against it. Letters about it are not lacking in the editor's post-bag. Yet not a mitigation nor remedy is suggested, save that of prohibition, which is as yet impossible.

Betting is a kind of instinct, difficult to eradicate, but possible to regulate. Games of hazard, as card-playing or dice, are naturally seductive in their way. They are useful as diversions and recreation. They exercise the qualities of judgment, calculation, and presence of mind, as well as furnish entertainment. It is only when serious stakes are played for that mischief and ruin begin.

But the seduction of card gambling—once widely irresistible—is now largely limited by the growing custom of playing only for small stakes. Family playing or club playing, professedly for money, is held to be disreputable. Formerly, drinking which

proceeded to the verge of intoxication, or went beyond it, was thought "manly." Now, where the effects are seen in the face, or in business, it is counted ruinous to social or professional reputation. Drinking is far more difficult of mitigation than betting, because the temptations to it occur much oftener. The capricious habit of going in search of luck can be restrained by common sense. Temperance in betting would be easier to effect were it not for the intemperate doctrine of total abstainers. By defaming moderation they rob the holy name of temperance of its charm, its strength and its trust. By teaching that "moderation is an inclined plane, polished as marble, and slippery as glass, on which whoever sets his foot, slips down into perdition," they destroy moderation by making it a terror. It brings it into contempt and distrust, and undermines self-confidence and self-respect. Yet it is by moderation that we live. Moderation in eating is an absolute condition of health—as the Indian proverb puts it: "Disease enters by the mouth." A man who disregards moderation in work, or in pleasure, or diet, seldom lives out half his days. He who has no moderation in judgment, in belief, in opinion, in politics, or piety, is futile in counsel, and dangerous in his example. If the disparagement of self-control has not destroyed the capacity and confidence of moderation in the public heart, temperance in betting is surely possible.

Occasionally a minister of religion will ask me

what I have to say about betting. I answer, "It is difficult to extinguish it, but possible to mitigate it." I give an instance from my own experience.

Years ago when I was editing the *Reasoner*, Dr. Shorthouse contributed a series of instructive papers on the physiology of racing horses. Out of courtesy to him I took a ticket in a sweepstake in which he was concerned, but in which I felt no interest. Months after, I saw that the owner of the prize was unknown. My brother, knowing I had a ticket, found it among my papers, and I received £50. I invested the amount, intending to use the interest in some future speculation, if I made any, which was not in my way. To that £50 there is added now more than £50 of accumulated interest, with which I might operate if so inclined. Were I in the crusade against betting I should say, "Form societies for Temperance in Betting, of which the rules shall be—

"'1.—No member may make any bet unless he is able, having regard to his social obligations, to lose the sum he risks, and is willing to lose it, if he fails to win.

"'2.—When he does win anything, he shall invest it, and bet with the interest, and every time he wins, shall add the amount to the original investment, which would give him a larger sum for future recreation in that way.'"

There is a Church of England Temperance Society which has the courage to believe in moderation, and which makes it a rule of honour to keep clear of all excess. Thousands in every walk of life have been saved to society under this sensible encouragement, and where an occasional act of excess would have been counted venial, it is regarded as revolting as an act of indecency.

I have known men in the betting ring who made up their mind that when they acquired a certain sum they would retire, nor step again in the treacherous paths of hazard—and they kept their resolution. But very few are able to do this, having no trained will.

I am against extremes in social conduct, save where reason shows it to be a necessity. If Betting Limited was approved by the public, betting at hazard would become as socially infamous as petty larceny. In the dearth of suggestions for the mitigation of an evil as serious as that of drunkenness, I pray forgiveness for that I have made.

Previous to 1868, I assisted in establishing the *Scottish Advertiser* conducted by Walter Parlane. It bore the following motto, which I wrote for it:

"Whatever trade Parliament licenses, it recognises —and so long as such trade is a source of public revenue, it is entitled to public protection."

I still agree with the sentiment expressed. All I meant was a reasonable protection of the interest

which the law had conceded to the trade. The predatory impudence of the monopoly privileges the trade has since extorted against the public interests was in no man's mind then. No one intended that the concession of just protection should be construed into extortion. As respects compensation, the temperate party refused it. I was not of their opinion. I agreed with them that the publicans had no logical claim for compensation, but I would have conceded it as the lesser of two evils, just as it was better to free the West Indian slaves by purchase than to continue their lawful subjection. If to maintain in full force the legalised machinery of drunkenness be only half as dreadful in its consequences as temperance advocates truly represent, it would be cheaper as well as more humane to limit it by graduated compensation.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

PENAL CHRISTIANITY

PREDATORY Christianity would not be far from the mark. Christianity is of the nature of a penal settlement where independent-minded persons are made to expiate the sin of thinking for themselves. There can be no real goodwill in any one who is not for justice and equality. No cause can command respect, or can claim a hearing from others which is not based on absolute fairness. Many well-meaning Christians never inquire whether the great cause they have at heart fulfils this condition. In the past this omission has been a lasting cause of alienation from their views.

Between 1850 and 1860 there sat in St. Bride's Vestry, London, a group of Christian churchwardens who twice a year sent agents to seize property from my house in Fleet Street, because I refused to pay tithes. Yet there are people who tell us without tiring, of the depravity of the French revolutionists and atheists who laid, or proposed to lay hands upon Church property. Yet these Christian officers,

acting under the eye of an opulent rector in the wealthiest capital in the world, seized clocks and bales of paper on the premises of heretics, in the name of the Church! Did not this disqualify the Church as ministers of consolation? The greatest consolation is justice. Is it not spiritual effrontery to despoil a man, then invite him to the communion table? In our day by predatory acts, they confiscate Nonconformist property to maintain Church schools. Can it be that heaven recognised agents engaged in petty larceny? Are they intrusted with the keys of heaven? May the priest be a thief? Can a man expect to be admitted at the Golden Gate with a burglar's passport in his hand? There exist penal laws against all who do not stand on the side of faith, which Nonconformists as well as Churchmen connive at, profit by, and maintain. Is not this destructive of their spiritual pretensions? Can they preach of holiness and truth without a blush? No higher criticism can condemn Christianity, as it is self condemned by resting on predatoriness. No person who does not stand on the Christian side can leave property for promoting his views, as a Christian can for promoting his. No Christian conscience is touched at this disadvantage imposed upon the independent thinker. No sermon is preached against it. No Christian petition is ever set up against it. Neither the Church conscience nor the Nonconformist conscience is stirred by the existence of this injustice. It

would cease if they objected to it. But they do not object to it.

There are prelates, priests, clergymen, and Nonconformist ministers personally to be respected, who in human things I trust. But for their spiritual vocation, is it possible to have respect or trust? To tender consolation with one hand while they keep the other in my pocket is an act never absent from my mind. I belong to a Secular party who seek improvement by material means; but were there any body of Christians upon whom that party imposed legal disadvantages in its own interest, and kept them there by silence or connivance, Parliament would hear from me pretty frequently until the insulting privileges were annulled. Any pretension to having principles worthy of acceptance, or regard, or even respect, would be impertinence in us so long as we were unfair to others.

I caused to be brought into Parliament a Bill in which Sir Philip Manfield took the leading interest, entitled:—

Civil and Religious Liberty Extension.

A

B I L L

To secure the Extension of Civil and Religious Liberty.

(*Prepared and brought in by Mr. Manfield, Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir Geo. R. Sitwell, Mr. Picton, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. W. McLaren, Mr. H. P. Cobb, Mr. Howell, Mr. Chas. Fenwick, Mr. Benn, Mr. Storey, and Mr. Hunter.*)

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[Bill 464.]

Memorandum.

THIS Bill comprises but a small extension of religious equality. Its object is to enable a man "to do what he likes with his own" for admittedly lawful purposes. It is affirmed by legal decisions that any man may believe what he pleases, speak what he pleases, publish his honest conviction, provided he does it in a temperate and considerate manner; and he may, while living, give money to maintain his views. All this Bill seeks is that he may, at his death, bequeath money for such purpose. This Bill merely proposes to extend a right which Christians of every denomination enjoy, but which hitherto has been denied to those who may conscientiously object to prevailing opinions.

BILL

TO

Secure the Extension of Civil and Religious Liberty.

WHEREAS it is expedient to remove the Disabilities under which persons suffer desirous of endowing, creating, and maintaining charitable and other Trusts for religious and ethical inquiry, so as to further extend civil and religious liberty:

2 Nothing contained in this Act shall affect or be deemed to repeal or contravene in any way such parts of the Act 9 George II., cap. 36, relating to Mortmain as remain unrepealed, or any other Act amending or altering such Act; and the provisions of all such Acts now in force shall apply to all Trusts created under this Act.

9 George II., cap. 36.

3 After the passing of this Act, notwithstanding any Act, Rule of Common Law, Rule of Equity, or Rule of Practice of any Court of Justice now in force to the contrary, it shall be lawful for any person to create and endow, or create or endow, any Trust for inquiry into the foundations and tendency of religious and ethical beliefs which from time to time prevail, or for the maintenance and propagation of the results of such inquiry. And the method of application of Bequests made for the purposes aforesaid shall be, on the part of those responsible for their administration, subject to revision at intervals of thirty years.

Power to create and endow, or create or endow, any Trust for the maintenance, and propagation of, any tenets, religious or speculative.

4 Such Trust, whether created by Deed or Will, or by other instrument,

Trust to be deemed Charitable Trust.

shall be deemed a charitable Trust, and shall be administered and given effect to in all respects in as full and complete a manner as in the case of religious and charitable Trusts now recognised by Law; and the doctrine of *Cy-pres* shall be applied to it when circumstances shall arise requiring the application of such doctrine.

This Bill was not proceeded with. It required a member like Samuel Morley, of known Christianity and a conscience, to carry it through the House.

A theory has been started that by registering an association, under the Friendly Societies Act, it would legalise its proceedings and virtually repeal all the laws confiscating bequests. No case of this kind has come before the higher courts. To do the Government justice, I know no case in which the Crown has interfered to confiscate a bequest on the ground of heresy in its use. Members of families, legally entitled to the property of a testator, may claim the money and get it. If the family enters no claim the bequest takes effect. In the meantime the state of the law prevents testators leaving property for the maintenance of their opinions, and Christians bring charges against philosophical thinkers for lack of generosity in building halls as Christians do chapels. The Christian reproaches the philosopher for not giving, when he has con-

fiscated the bequest of the philosopher and the power of giving.

Priests often mourn at the disinclination to listen to the tenets they proclaim, and advertise in the newspapers the melancholy fact that only one person in five is found on Sunday in a place of worship, and do not remember how many persons remain away, not so much from dislike of the tenets preached, as from dislike of the injustice which they would have to share if they belonged to any Christian communion.

CHAPTER XXXIX

TWO SUNDAYS

None of our Sunday Societies or Sunday Leagues seem ever to have thought of the advantages of advocating as I have long done—two Sundays—a Devotional Sunday and a Secular Sunday.

The advocacy of two Sundays would put an end to the fear or pretence that anybody wants to destroy the one we have.

The Policy of a Second Sunday is a necessity.

It would put an end to the belief that the working classes are mad, and not content with working six days want to work on the seventh.

It would preserve the present Sunday as a day of real rest and devotion. The one Sunday we now have is neither one thing nor the other. Its insufficiency for rest prevents it being an honest day of devotion. Proper recreation is out of the question. There is too little time for excursions out of town on the Saturday half-day holiday. Imprisonment in town

irritates rather than refreshes—mere rest is not recreation.

> "A want of occupation gives no rest.
> A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed."

Those who would provide recreation in the country find it not worth while for the precarious chance of half-day visitors. On a Secular Sunday recreation would be organised and be more self-respecting than it now can be.

1. It would conduce to the public health. The manufacturing towns of England are mostly pandemoniums of smoke or blast-furnace fumes. The winds of heaven cannot clear them away in one day—less than forty-eight hours of cessation of fire and fume would not render the air breathable.

2. With two Sundays one would be left undisturbed, devoted to repose, to piety, contemplation and improvement of the mind.

3. It would give the preacher intelligent, fresh-minded and fruitful-minded hearers, instead of the listless, wearied, barren-headed auditors, who lower the standard of his own mind by forcing upon him the endeavour to speak to the level of theirs.

4. A second Sunday would give the people real rest when nobody would frown upon them, nor preach against them, nor pray against them.

5. It would be cheaper to millowners to stop their works two clear days than run them on short days; and there need not be fears of claims of further

reduction of forty-eight hours a week on the part of workpeople, who would have a real sense of freedom from unending toil with two days' rest and peace. Manufacturing towns would no longer be, as now, penal settlements of industry. Holiness would no longer be felt to be wearisomeness.

But for Moses, the changes here sought would have existed long ago. One day's rest in the week was enough for Jews who were doing nothing when one Sunday was prescribed to them. Had Moses foreseen the manufacturing system, instead of saying "six days," he would have said, "Five days shalt thou labour."

If he deserves well of mankind who makes two blades of wheat grow where only one grew before; he deserves better who causes two Sundays to exist where only one existed before—for corn merely feeds the body, whereas reasonable leisure feeds the mind.

CHAPTER XL

BYWAYS OF LIBERTY

It is worth while recording the curious, not to say ignominious, ways from which justice to new thought has emerged. In the 5 and 6 Victoriæ, cap. 38, 1842, the trial of eighteen offences were removed from the jurisdiction of Justices of the Peace in Quarter Sessions and transferred to the Assize Court. Persons accused were often subject to magisterial intolerance, ignorance and offensiveness. Among the transferred offences were forgery, bigamy, abductions of women. "Blasphemy and offences against religion," often of doubtful and delicate interpretation, were two of the subjects taken out of magisterial hands and placed under the decision of better-informed and more responsible judges. "Blasphemy" was the general title under which atheism, heresy, and other troubles of the questioning intellect were designated. "Composing, printing or publishing blasphemous libels," were included in the list of subjects to be dealt with in higher courts. Thus better chances of justice

were secured to thinkers and disseminators of forbidden ideas. This new charter of thought, which conceded legal fairness to propagandism, was not the subject of a special statute, but was interpolated in a list, which read like an auctioneer's catalogue, eluded Parliamentary prejudice, which might have been fatal, had it been formally submitted to its notice.

In the same manner the Affirmation Act, which changed the status of the disbeliever in theology from that of an outlaw to that of a citizen, crept into the Statute Book through a criminal avenue. A Bill to admit atheists, agnostics, or other conscientious objectors to the ecclesiastic oath, to make a responsible affirmation instead, was twice or thrice thrown out of the windows of Parliament. Sir John Trelawny used to say Mr. Gathorne Hardy (afterwards Lord Cranbrook) would rise up, as I have seen him, with a face as furiously red as one of his own blast furnaces at Lowmoor, and move its rejection. It was passed at last by the friendly device of G. W. Hastings, M.P., the founder of the Social Science Association, in a Bill innocently purporting to better "promote the discovery of truth" by enabling persons charged with adultery to give evidence on their own behalf.

Then and there a clause was introduced which had no relation to the extension of the right to give evidence, but upon the exemption of an entirely different class of persons from the obligation of

making oath. Adulterers appear always to be Christians, since no case is recorded in which any party in an adultery action professed any scruple at taking the oath. Yet the Bill set forth that "any person in a civil or criminal proceeding who shall object to make an oath," shall make a declaration instead. When the Bill became an Act secular affirmation became legalised. Thus by a clause treading upon the heels of adultery, the witness having heretical and unecclesiastical convictions was enabled to be honest without peril.

In 1842, as I witnessed at the Gloucester Assizes, no barrister would defend any one accused of dissent from Christianity, but apologised for him and proclaimed his contrition for his sin of thinking for himself. Slave thought of the mind, chained to custom, could be defended, but not Free Thought, which is independent of everything save the truth. By the Act of 1869 [1] atheists ceased to be outlaws, and were henceforth enabled to give evidence in their own defence. Wide-awake and vigilant as a rule, bigotry was asleep that day. Thus by circuitous and furtive paths the right of free thought has made its way to the front of the State.

[1] 32 & 33 chap. 68, Evidence Amendment Act.

CHAPTER XLI

LAWYERS' LICENCE

THE extraordinary legal licence of disordered and offensive imputation has been limited since 1842. In those days, officers of the law, who always professed high regard for morality and truth, had no sense of either, when they were drawing up theological indictments. In the affair at Cheltenham I delivered a lecture on Home Colonies (a proposal similar to the Garden Cities of to-day), to which nobody objects now. As I always held that discussion was the right of the audience, as self-defensive against the errors of lecturer or preacher, an auditor, availing himself of this concession, arose in the meeting and asked: "Since I had spoken of duty to man, why I had said nothing of duty to God"? My proper answer was, that having announced one subject, the audience would have a right to complain that I had trepanned them into hearing another, which they would not hear willingly. Such a reply would have been received with outcries, and the Christian auditor would have

said, "I dare not answer the question—that I held opinions I was afraid to disclose." All the while the questioner knew that an honest answer might have penal consequences, which he intended to invoke. Christians in those days lacked winning ways. I gave a defiant answer, which caused my imprisonment. There was no imputation in my reply, which merely produced merriment.

Yet my indictment said I "was a wicked, malicious, evil-disposed person," and that I "wickedly did compose, speak and utter, pronounce and publish with a loud voice, of and concerning the Holy Scriptures, to the high displeasure of Almighty God, and against the peace of our Lady the Queen." Every sentence was an outrage, and nearly every word untrue. I was not wicked, nor malicious, nor evil-disposed. I did not compose the speech—it was purely spontaneous. I never had a loud voice. I never referred to the Holy Scriptures, and I only disturbed the peace of our Lady the Queen by a ripple of laughter.

I carried no arms. I was known as belonging to the "Moral Force Party" in politics, and was entirely unprepared to attack any person, let alone one Omnipotent with "force of arms." The imputations in the indictment were not only untrue, but contained more blasphemy than was in the mind of any one to utter. I called the Judge's attention to the atrocity of the language of the indictment. He did not say there

was anything objectionable in it, which showed that the morality of the Bench was not higher at that time than the morality of the magistrates. In the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, known in the town as the Rev. Francis Close's (afterwards Dean of Chichester) paper, I was described as a "miscreant" for the answer I had given to my auditor. Mr. Justice Erskine had no word of reproof for the infamous term applied to me.

As I have elsewhere said, I spoke in my defence upwards of nine hours. The length was owing to the declaration of one of the magistrates (Mr. Bransby Cooper) that the Court would not hear me defend myself. Why I defended myself at all, was from a very different reason.

No barrister in those days would defend any one charged with dissenting from the Christian religion. The counsel always apologised to the jury for the opinions of his client, which admitted his guilt. This was done at that very assizes at which I was tried. A Mr. Thompson, a barrister in Court, who we mistook for a son of General Perronet Thompson, also at the Bar, was engaged to defend George Adams, charged with an act of heresy. The false Thompson expressed contrition for Adams, without knowing or inquiring whether it was true that he felt it. Neither counsel nor magistrate nor judge seemed to think it necessary that what they said should be true.

Thus my justification of the seeming presumption

of defending myself was the fact that no counsel would defend us without compromising us. I had no taste for martyrdom. I did not want martyrdom; I did not like martyrdom. Martyrdom is not a thing to be sought, but a thing to be submitted to when it comes.

This narrative shows that, in one respect, legal taste and truth have improved in my time.

CHAPTER XLII

CHRISTIAN DAYS

MANY religious thinkers, ecclesiastical and Nonconformist, whose friendship I value, will expect from me in these autobiographic papers some account of the origin of opinions in which they have been interested. Sermons, speeches, pamphlets, even books have been devoted to criticism of my heresies. It is due to those who have taken so much trouble about me that I should explain, not what the opinions were—that would be irrelevant here—but how I came by them. That may be worth recounting, and to some serious people perhaps worth remembering.

Confessions are not in my way. They imply that something it was prudent to conceal has to be "owned up." Of that kind I have no story to tell. An apologia is still less to my taste. I make no apology for my opinions. I do not find that persons who dissent from me, ever so strenuously, think of apologising to me for doing so. They do right in standing by their convictions

without asking my leave. I hope they will take it in good part if I stand by mine without asking theirs.

My mother did not go to the Established Church, to which her father belonged. She had natural piety of heart, and thought she found more personal religion among the Nonconformists than in the Church. She attended Carr's Lane Chapel, where the Rev. John Angell James preached—who had a great reputation in Birmingham for eloquence and for his evangelical writings. He was notorious in his day for denouncing players and ambitious preachers seeking to excel in the arts of this world; which caused the town people to say that he was dramatic against the drama and eloquent against eloquence. His name, "Angell" James, begat a belief that it was descriptive of himself, and that his doctrines were necessarily angelic. It seems absurd, but I shared this belief, and should not have been surprised to hear that he had some elementary development of wings out of sight. At the same time, Mr. James gave me the impression of severity in piety, and my feeling towards him was one of awe, dreading a near approach.

Some years after, I held a discussion of several nights with the Rev. W. J. Winks, of Leicester, who wrote to Mr. James to make inquiries concerning me. In 1881, some thirty-five years after the discussion, Mr. Winks' son showed me a letter which

Mr. James wrote in reply saying: "Holyoake was a boy in my Sunday School five years. He then went, through the persuasion of a companion, to Mr. Cheadle's for a short time, then to the Unitarian school (I believe entered a debating society), and became an unbeliever. He is a good son and kind to his mother, who is a member of one of our Baptist churches."

The Rev. Mr. Cheadle, of whom Mr. James speaks, was a Baptist minister. It is true I went to his church—my sister Matilda became a member of it—but I never joined it. The ceremony of baptism there was by immersion. It seemed poetical to me when I read the account of baptism in the Jordan; but I could not make up my mind to be baptised in a tank. The reason, however, that I gave at the time was the stronger and the true one—that I did not feel good enough to make a solemn public profession of faith. Mr. James was misinformed; I never belonged to a debating society.

It was very good of him to write of me so, when he must have been very much pained at the opinions he believed me then to hold. A man may speak generously privately, but he means it when he says the same thing publicly; and Mr. James did this. He wrote to a similar effect in the *British Banner* at the time when the Rev. Brewin Grant was painting portraits of me in pandemonium colours.

A small *Sunday School Magazine* came into my hands when I was quite a youth. It was edited by the Rev. W. J. Winks. As communications were invited from readers, I sent some evangelical verses to him. The first time of my seeing my initials in print was in Mr. Winks's magazine.

After a time, partly because the place of worship was nearer home, my mother joined a little church in Thorpe Street, and later one in Inge Street. They were melancholy little meeting-houses, and, as I always accompanied my mother, I had time to acquire that impression of them. A love of art was in some measure natural to me, and I thought that the Temple of God should be bright, beautiful and costly. As I was taught to believe that He was always present there, it seemed to me that He should not be invited (and all our prayers did invite Him) into a mean-looking place. It was seeing how earnestly my mother prayed at home for the welfare of her family, how beautiful and patient was her trust in heaven, and how trouble and misery increased in the household notwithstanding, that unconsciously turned my heart to methods of secular deliverance. She had lost children. I remember the consternation with which she told us one Sunday night that her pastor, the Rev. Mr. James, had stated in his sermon his fearsome belief that there were "children in hell not a span long." That Mr. James believed it

seemed to us the same as its being in the Bible. Another time he preached about the "sin against the Holy Ghost, which could never be forgiven, either in this world or the world to come." My mother's distress at the thought made a great impression upon me. A silent terror of Christianity crept into my mind. That one so pure and devout as my mother, who was incapable of committing sin knowingly, should be liable to commit this, and none of us know what it was, nor how or when consequences so awful were incurred, seemed to me very dreadful.

The first death at home of which I was conscious, occurred at a time when Church rates and Easter dues were enforced and augmented by a summons. None of us were old enough to take the money to the public office, and a little sister being ill, my mother, with reluctance, had to go. A small crowd of householders being there on the same errand, she was away some hours. When she returned, my sister was dead; and the thought that the money extorted by the Church might have succoured, if not saved the poor child, made the distress greater. My mother, always resigned, made no religious complaint, but I remember that, in our blind, helpless way, the Church became to us a thing of ill-omen. It was not disbelief, it was dislike, that was taking possession of our minds.

A man in my father's employ, who was super-

intendent of a Congregational Chapel School at Harborne, a village some three or four miles from Birmingham, asked me to assist as monitor in one of his classes. I was so young that John Collins, who preached at times in the chapel, took me by the hand, and I walked by his side. The distance was too far for my little feet, and in winter the snow found its way through my shoes. Collins afterwards became known as a Chartist advocate, and was imprisoned in Warwick Gaol with William Lovett, on the ground of political speeches. They jointly wrote the most intelligent scheme of Chartist advocacy made in their day. Elsewhere I have recounted incarcerations which befel many of my friends, proving that, within the memory of living men, the path of political and other pilgrims lay by the castles of giants who seized them by the way.

In the Carr's Lane Sunday School I was considered an attentive, devout-minded boy. All the hymns we sang I knew by heart, as well as most parts of the Bible. The only classic of a semi-secular nature my mother had in her house was Milton's "Paradise Lost"; we had besides a few works of ponderous Nonconformist divines, of which Boston's "Fourfold State" was one, to which I added Baxter's "Saints' Everlasting Rest." I devoured whatever came in my way that was religious. Being thought by this time capable of teaching the little that was deemed necessary in an

Evangelical Sunday school, I came to act as a small teacher at the Inge Street Chapel. These people were known as Pædo-Baptists—what that meant not a single worshipper knew. The point of doctrine which they did understand was that children should not be baptised when their small souls were in the jelly-fish state and knew nothing. When their little minds had grown and had some backbone of sense in them, and some understanding of religious things, the congregation thought that sprinkling them into spiritual fellowship might do them good.

Though my mother admitted that adult baptism was more reasonable, she never listened to the doctrine of baptism by immersion. She disliked innovation in piety. She had great tenacity in quiet belief, and thought public immersion a demonstration—very bad bathing of its kind—and might give you a cold.

Few young believers showed more religious zeal than I did in those days. On Sunday morning there was a prayer on rising, and one before leaving home. At half-past seven the teachers were invited to meet at chapel to pray for a blessing on the work of the day. When school commenced at nine o'clock the superintendent opened it with prayer, and closed it at eleven with another prayer. Then came the morning service of the chapel, at which I was present with my class. That included three prayers. At two

o'clock school began again, opening and ending with prayers by the superintendent, or by some teacher who was asked "to engage" in it, in his stead. At the close of the school, another prayer-meeting of teachers was held, for a blessing on the work done that day. At half-past six evening service took place, which included three more prayers. Afterwards, devout members of the congregation held a prayer-meeting on behalf of the work of the church. At all these meetings I was present, so that, together with graces before and after meals three times a day, and evening prayers at time of rest, heaven heard from me pretty frequently on Sundays. Many times since I have wondered at the great patience of God towards my unconscious presumption in calling attention so often to my insignificant proceedings. Atonement ought to include the sin of prayers.

Nor was this all. At chapels in Birmingham (1834), when anniversary sermons had been preached on Sunday by some ministers of mark, there would commonly be a public meeting on Monday at which they would speak, and to which I would go. On Tuesday evening I went to the Cherry Street Chapel, where the best Wesleyan preachers in the town were to be heard. On Wednesday I often attended the Carr's Lane sermon. Thursday would find me at the Bradford Street chapel, where there usually sat before me

a beautiful youth, whose sensuous grace of motion gave me as much pleasure as the sermon. I remember it because it was there I first became conscious of the charm of human strength and proportion. I had the Greek love of beauty in boys—not in the Greek sense, of which I knew nothing.

On Friday I generally went to the public prayer-meeting in Cherry Street, because Wesleyans were bolder and more original in their prayers than other Christians. In frequenting Wesleyan chapels I could not help noticing that their great preachers were also men of great build, of good width in the lower part of the face. Afterwards I found that their societies elsewhere were mostly composed of persons of sensuous make. Their preachers having strong voices, and drawing inspiration mainly from feeling, they had boldness of speech ; and those who had imagination had a picturesque expression. Independents and Baptists often tried to solve doubts, which showed that their convictions were tempered by thought to some extent ; but the Wesleyan knew nothing of thought—he put doubt away. He did not recognise that the Questioning Spirit came from the Angel of Truth. To the Wesleyans, inquiry is but the fair-seeming disguise of the devil, and to entertain it is of the nature of sin. These preachers, therefore, knowing nothing of the other side, were under none of the restrictions imposed by intelligence, and they de-

nounced the sceptics with a force which seemed holy from its fervour, and with a ferocity which only ignorance could inspire. So long as I knew less than they, their influence over me continued. Yet it was not vigorous denunciation which first allured me to them, though it long detained me among them—it was the information I had received, that they believed in universal salvation, which had fascination for me. There was something generous in that idea beyond anything taught me, and my heart cleaved to the people who thought it true. This doctrine came to me with the force of a new idea, always enchanting to the young. Had I been reared among Roman Catholics, I should have worshipped at the church of *All* Souls instead of the church of One Soul. Any Church whose name seemed least to exclude my neighbours would have most attracted me.

All the fertility of attendance at chapels recounted did not, as the reader will suppose, produce any weariness in me, or make me tired of Christianity. The incessant Bible reading, hymns, prayer, and evangelical sermons of Carr's Lane, Thorpe Street, and Inge Street did tire me. There was no human instruction in their spiritual monotony. My mind aches now when I think of those days. When I took courage to visit various chapels, the variety of thought gave me ideas. The deacons of the Inge Street Chapel bade me

beware that "the rolling stone gathered no moss." [1] Yet I did gather moss.

Though I was then hardly fifteen, the other teachers would gently ask me if I would engage in prayer in their meetings, which meant praying aloud among them. The idea made me tremble. I was very shy, and the sound of my own voice was as a thing apart from me, for which I was responsible, and which I could not control. Then, what should I say? To say what others said, to utter a few familiar scriptural phrases, diluted by ignorant earnestness, seemed to me, even at that time, an insipid offering of praise. Then it occurred to me to notice any newness of thought and expression I heard in week-day discourses, and with them I composed small prayers, which brought me some credit when I spoke them, as they were unlike any one else's. But only once—at a Friday night's church meeting—did I pray with natural freedom. Afterwards I avoided requests to pray, as I thought it unreal to be thinking more of the terms of the prayer than the simple spirit of it, and I hoped that one day fitting language would become natural to me.

It is proof that my mind was as free from scientific inspiration as any saint's, since I had no misgiving as to the effect of prayer. If Christianity were preached for the first time now to well-to-do

[1] Thomas Tusser, of the sixteenth century, to whom the phrase is ascribed, said: "The stone that is rolling can gather no moss."

people, able to help themselves, it would be treated like Mormonism in America; but to the poor who have neither money nor reflection Christianity, as a praying power, is a very real thing. People who have no idea that help will, or can, come in any other way, are glad to think that it may come from heaven. It had never been explained to me that low wages were caused by there being too many labourers in the market, or that ill-health is caused by poor food and hard condition. It was my daily habit to pray for things most necessary and always deficient, not for myself alone, but for others to whom in their need I would give, at any cost to myself—to whom, if disinterested prayers were answered, any God of sympathy would give. Yet, though no prayer was answered, it did not strike me that that method of help failed. Prayer was no remedy, yet I did not see its futility. Had I spent a single hour only in "dropping a bucket into an empty well, never drawing any water up," I should not have continued the operation without further inquiry. It never struck me that, if preachers could obtain material aid by prayer, or knew any form of supplication by which it could be obtained, they might grow rich in a day by selling copies of that priceless formula. No Church would be needy, no believer would be poor.

In those days Christianity was a very real thing to me. What was part of my conviction was also

part of my life. So far as I had knowledge, I was like the parson of Chaucer, who—

> "Christ's love and his Apostles twelve
> Taught, and *first he followed it himselve.*"

This I did with a zeal of spirit which neither knew nor sought any evasion of the letter.

At this time there came to Birmingham one Rev. Tully Cribbace, a middle-aged man with copious dark hair, pale, thin face, and earnest, unceasing speech. The zealous members of many congregations went to hear him. He interested me greatly. He rebuked our Churches, as is the way with new, wandering preachers—*without appointments*—for their want of faith in the promise of Christ, who had said that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do." I had the belief, I had asked in His name; but nothing came of it. With insufficient clothing I had gone out in inclement weather to worship, or to teach, trusting in that promise that I should be protected if no gifts of clothing came from heaven. No gifts did come, but illness from exposure often did. In a very anxious spirit I went to Mr. Cribbace's lodgings in Newhall Street, where he had said inquirers might call upon him. When he asked me "what I wished to say," I at once, not without emotion, replied, "Do you really believe, sir, what you said? Is it true that what we ask in faith we shall receive? I have great need to know that."

My seemingly abrupt and distrustful question was not a reflection upon his veracity of speech. Mr. Cribbace quite understood that from my tone of inquiry. It never struck me that his threadbare dress, his half-famished look, and necessity of "taking up a collection" the previous night "to pay expenses," showed that faith was not a source of income to him. Yet he had told us that faith would be all that to us, and with a sincerity which never seemed to me more real on any human lips. He did not mistake the earnestness or purport of my question. He parried with his answer with many words, and at length said that "the promise was to be taken with the provision that what we asked for would be given, if God thought it for our good." Christ did not think this; He did not say it; He did not suggest it. Knowing how many generations of men to the end of the world would imperil their lives on the truth of His words, He could not suffer treacherous ambiguity to creep into His meaning by omission. His words were: "If it were not so, I would have told you." There was no double meaning in Christ, no reticence, no half-statement, leaving the hearer to find out the half-concealed words which contradicted the half-revealed. All this I believed of him, and therefore I trusted Christ's sayings.

St. Chrysostom, in the prayer of the Church Litany, does not stop, but keeps open the gap

through which this evasion crawls. "Almighty God," he says, "who dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou wilt grant *their* requests. Fulfil *now*, O Lord, the desires and petitions of Thy servants, as may be most *expedient* for them." Christ was no juggler like St. Chrysostom. A prayer is a deposit—the money of despair paid into a bank; but no one would pay money into a bank if they were told they would get back only as much as was good or expedient for them.

My heart sank within me as Mr. Cribbace spoke the words of evasion. There was nothing to be depended upon in prayer. The doctrine was a juggle of preachers. They might not mean it or think it straight out, but this is what it came to. Christ a second time repeated the words: "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." However it might be true in apostolic days, it was not true in ours, and the preachers knew it, and did not say so. Christ might as well be dead if the promise had passed away. Christianity had no material advantage to offer to the believer, whatever else it may have had.

Mr. Cribbace spoke the truth now; I could see that. Never did that morning pass from my mind. That answer did not make me disbelieve, but I was never again the same Christian I had been before. The foundation on which every forlorn, helpless, uninformed, trusting believer rests had

slipped—slipped away from under my feet. Whatever Christianity might be, it was no dependence in human need. The hard, material world was not touched by prayer. How else it could be moved I then knew not.

For myself, I did not think about the terms of the Bible, but believed them. If there was an exception, it related to the saying of Christ that every "idle word" men should speak should be recorded against them. If "idle words" were to go down, then angry or wicked words would also be recorded. At night, as I made my last prayer, I tried to think over what I had said or done which might have been added to that serious catalogue, and thus I suffered more than my fair share of alarm. I did not know then that the rich have a much smaller account against them above than the poor, and that they fare better than the indigent in heaven, as they do on earth. A gentleman has his house and grounds, no one he dislikes can enter his home. His neighbour cannot much annoy him; he is at a distance from him. If he has a feud with his annoyer, he does not meet him above once a year, perhaps at a county ball, and there he can "cut" him; while a poor man lives in a house where he has several fellow-lodgers, who have done him a shabby turn, and whom he meets four or five times a day on the stairs. Evil thoughts come into his heart, evil words escape his lips, and he himself employs a

recording angel all his time in taking down his offences, while the rich man has, peradventure, only a single note made against his name once a week.

It was after I had been some time at the Mechanics' Institution—which was quite a new world of thought to me—that I was asked if I would conduct a class at the New Meeting Unitarian Sunday school. The rooms in which the Mechanics' Institution was held were those of the Sunday school of the Old Meeting-house, no other being obtainable. Since anything I knew had been taught me by these generous believers, it seemed to me natural that they should invite me to assist in one of their schools, and that I should comply. My consenting was not because I shared their tenets. The Rev. Mr. Crompton, whose sister subsequently became Mrs. George Dawson, asked me after a time what my view was as to the unity of Deity. My answer was that I believed in three Deities. I had never thought of the possibility of all this great world being managed by *one* Being. My preference for the acquaintance of Unitarians was that there was so much more to be learned among them than among any other religious body I had known. My invitation to their school was to teach Euclid to one class, and the simpler elements of logic to another. These were subjects never thought of in the Evangelical Sunday schools to which I had be-

longed. The need of human knowledge had become very clear to me. I could see that young men of my age trained in Unitarian schools were very superior to Evangelical youths, who had merely spiritual information. Devoutness I knew to be goodness; but I could see it was not power. My personal piety did not conceal from me my inferiority to those better informed. This made me grateful to the Unitarians, who cared on Sundays for human as well as spiritual things; and I thought it a duty to help them, as far as my humble attainments might enable me.

As soon as this was known in the Inge Street church, to which I was considered to belong, the elders spake unto me thereupon. I was invited to a prayer-meeting, which I readily consented to attend, when I found that all the prayers were directed against me—were mere solicitations to heaven to divert my heart from continuing to attend the Unitarian schools. It would be wronging my sincere and well-meaning friends of that time, to recount the deterrents they used and the fears they expressed. Religion refined by human intelligence was regarded then as a form of sin. At the end I did not dissent from their view, but I made no promise to do what they wished. It seemed to me a sin that any youths should be as ignorant as I had been, and I refuse to give them such knowledge as I had acquired. In this matter of teaching I said it was right to do as

the Unitarians did, but wrong to believe as they believed. This opinion I held all the while I was a teacher in their Sunday school.

Had these prayerful friends of mine succeeded in their object of persuading me from association with these larger believers, they would have shut the door of freedom, effort and improvement for me. My lot would have been to spend my days inviting others, with much earnestness, to cherish like incapacity. Yet I have no word of disrespect for their honest-hearted endeavour to advise me, as they thought, for the best. It was the desire of knowledge which saved me from their dangerous temptation.

The Meeting-house to whose Sunday school I went, was the one where Dr. Priestley formerly preached. It was my duty on a Sunday to accompany my class into chapel during the morning service. The scholars' seats were near the gallery stairs. The other teachers sat at the end of the forms, farthest from the stairs. I always chose the end nearest the stairs. When invited to sit elsewhere I never explained the reason why I did not. My reason was my belief that the wickedness of the preacher, in addressing only one Deity, would one day be resented by heaven, and that the roof would fall in upon the congregation. As I did not share their faith, I thought I ought not to partake of their fate ; and I thought that by being near the stairs I could escape—

if I saw anything uncomfortable in the behaviour of the ceiling, which I frequently watched. Being the person who would first understand what was about to happen, I concluded that my descent would be unimpeded by the flying and unsuspecting congregation. It seems to me only yesterday that I sat calculating my chance of escape as Mr. Kentish's sonorous and instructive sermon was proceeding.

CHAPTER XLIII

NEW CONVICTIONS WHICH CAME UNSOUGHT

THESE singular instances of bygone experience of a religious student, of which few similar have ever been given, must be suggestive—perhaps instructive—to religious teachers in church and chapel, engaged in inculcating their views. How much happier had been my life had there then existed that tolerance of social effort, that regard of social needs, that consideration of individual aspiration, which happily now prevail. This chapter will conclude what Herbert Spencer would call the "natural history" of a mind, or, as Lord Westbury would say, "what I am pleased to call my mind."

One evening, at the Mechanics' Institution, Birmingham, I was told that Robert Owen, who had unexpectedly arrived in town, was likely to speak in Well Lane, Allison Street, and was asked "would I go?" Mistaking the name for Robert Hall, I said I would. Of Robert Owen I had

scarcely heard; of the Rev. Robert Hall (who had denounced all deflectors from the Baptist standard with brilliant bitterness) I had heard, admired (and do still), and much desired to see. Great was my disappointment when I discovered the mistake. As Mr. Owen passed me on entering the room, I—a mere youth—looked at the aged philosopher (who had been working for human welfare long before I was born) with an impertinent pity. I felt also some real terror for his future, as I thought what a "wicked old man" he must be. I had been assured by Robert Hall that morality without faith was of no avail in the eye of God.

Eventually it became known at the works where I was employed that I had been to hear Robert Owen, and remarks were made. In those days (1837–8) advocates of social reform were called "Socialists." Some of the remarks made against them were unjust. Some "Socialists" were fellow-students at the Mechanics' Institution. These commentators made the usual mistake of concluding that the social thinkers in question must hold the opinions it was inferred that they held. At that time I did not understand this way of reasoning, though no doubt I used it myself, as those among whom I was reared knew no better. Everybody was sure that an opponent must mean what you inferred he meant, and charged against him the inference as a fact—never thinking of inquiring

whether it was so. If I was not misled by those confident arguments, it was because I knew that the persons accused were leal and kind in daily life. Out of mere love of fairness I defended them to my working associates, as far as my knowledge went. Being told that "I did not know what their principles were" caused me to read their pamphlets and to hear some lectures. For a year or more I used the knowledge thus gained against the uninformed impressions of their aspersers around me.

Well do I remember that one day, as I passed two workmen in the mill-yard, one said to the other, "That is young Holyoake the sceptic." They did not know that "sceptic" merely meant a doubter in search of evidence. They used the word in the brutal sense of one who disbelieved the truth, knowing it to be the truth. The term startled me, as I neither believed nor assumed to believe what I had reported as the opinions of my friends. For myself, I had no thought of holding their opinions. The heresy supposed to be included in them was, indeed, my aversion. Then I made the resolution to examine their principles, with a view to show what arguments I could myself bring against them. Great was my dismay when, after months of thought, I found that the questioned tenets seemed, on the whole, to be true. These tenets were that wise material circumstances were likely to have a better influence on men than bad ones; and that, men

having general qualities which they have inherited, the treatment of the worst should be tempered by compassion for their ill-fortune. Then it concerned me no more what any one said of me. It was as though I had passed into a new country, leaving behind me the barren land of supplication for a land of self-effort and improvement; and entered into the fruitful kingdom of material endeavour, where help and hope dwelt. Heretofore doubt and perturbation as to whether I was of the "elect" had oft agitated me. Now, I had no bonds in the death of my disproved opinions—no struggle, no misgivings. Without wish or effort of mine, I was delivered by reason alone from the prison-house in which I had dwelt with its many terrors. Not all at once did the terrors go. They long hovered about the mind like evil spirits tempting me to distrust the truth written in the Book of Nature, of which I believed God to be the author.

Some time before this change in my opinion occurred I had taken in, out of my slender savings, the beautiful Diamond edition of the Rev. Mr. Stebbing's Bible in parts. The type was very fine, the outline illustrations seemed to me very beautiful; they affect me with admiration still. It was the first book with marks of art about it that I had possessed. I had it bound in morocco, with silver clasps. It was quite a wonder in the workshop when I took it there. To possess many things I never cared, but if I had only one, and it had some beauty and

finish in it, it was to me as though I had a light in my room at night, and the thought of it made me glad in the dark. A fellow-workman of sincere piety, whom I respected very much, coveted this Bible, and induced me to sell it to him, which I did, as I had it in my mind to get another bound in a yet daintier way.

Simple and natural as was this transaction, it was misconstrued. It was said I had "sold" my Bible, as though it was my act instead of being the act of another. Next it was reported that I had "burnt" it. Thus I became a founder of myths without knowing it. Nevertheless, it gave me pain—for nothing was more alien to my mind, my taste and reverence, than the act imputed to me. But what made a greater impression upon me, it being inconceivable, and unforeseen, was that he who induced me to part with my valued volume never came forward to say so. The inspiration of Christianism I had taken to be personal truth which could be trusted. In the noblest minds it is so still. But for the first time I found a Christian could be mean.

It was about this period that a poor woman I knew drew near to death from consumption. At times I visited and read the Scriptures to her. One night I asked her if she would like some one to pray with her. As she wished it, I induced one with whom I had been a Sunday school teacher to come with me one evening and pray by her side.

The consolation was very precious to her, and that is why I sought it for her. At no time did it seem to me that everybody should be of one opinion, since honesty of life consists in living and dying in that opinion of the truth of which you are convinced. This man whom I took with me was a workman, poor, mean, and utterly uninformed. In religious sympathy he inclined to the Ranters, who are not at all melodious Christians. Yet heaven might respect his prayer as much as a bishop's, for he had given up his night, after a hard day's labour, to afford what humble consolation he could to this poor woman.

One sentiment that had always possessed me was a pleasure in vengeance. I had quite a distinct passion of hatred where I was wronged, and had no means of resistance or redress. A man in my father's employ did something very unfair to me when I was quite a youth, and during nine years that I worked by his side I did not forget it or forgive it. The Lord's prayer taught me that I should "forgive those who trespassed against me," and at times I thought I had forgiven him, but I never had. Christian as I was, the revengeful lines of Byron long influenced me :—

> "If we do but watch the hour,
> There never yet was human power,
> That could evade, if unforgiven,
> The patient search and vigil long
> Of him who treasures up a wrong."

No sermon, no prayer, no belief, no Divine command, rendered me neutral towards those I disliked. Neither authority nor precept had force which gave no reason for amity. But when I came to understand Coleridge's saying that "human affairs are a process," I could see that patience and wise adaptation of condition was the true method of improvement, since the tendency to nobleness or baseness was alike an inheritance nurtured by environment. If tempest of the human kind came, precaution and not anger—which means ignorance taken by surprise—was the remedy. Pity takes the place of resentment. Clearly, vengeance did but add to the misfortune of destiny.

I oft pondered Hooker's saying, that "anger is the sinew of the soul, and he that lacketh it hath a maimed mind." Nevertheless, I am content to be without that "sinew." Anger is rather the epilepsy of the understanding than the dictate of reason. I had come to see that there are no bad weeds in Nature—but much bad gardening. The reasons of amity had become clear to me, and that Helvetius was right. We should "go on loving men, but not expecting too much from them." Even Hooker could not win me back to the profitless pursuits of anger and retaliation.

These bygone days left their instruction with me evermore. In them I learned consideration for others. Whatever my convictions, I was always

the same to my mother. The wish to change her views never entered my mind. She had chosen her own. I respected her choice, and she respected mine. In after years, when I visited Birmingham, I would read the Bible to her. She liked to hear my voice again as she had heard it in earlier days. When her eyes became dim by time I would send her large type editions of the New Testament, and of religious works which dwelt upon the human tenderness of Christ. The piety of parents should be sacred in the eyes of children. Convictions are the food of the soul, which perisheth on any other diet than that which can be assimilated by the conscience.

One of the bygones which had popularity in my day was silence, where explicitness was needed. Nothing is more grateful to the young understanding than clear, definite outlines. *The Spectator* (July 23, 1891) said that "Dean Stanley could not at any time have exactly defined what his own theology really was." George Dawson, who charmed so many audiences and was under no official restraint, never attempted it. Emerson, who criticised everybody who had an opinion, never disclosed his. Carlyle, who filled the air with adjurations to sincerity of conviction, carefully concealed his own. They who take credit for advising the public what to believe should avow their own belief. Otway, crossing the street to Dryden's house, wrote upon his door: "Here lives

Dryden, a poet and a wit." Seeing these words as he came out, Dryden wrote under them: "Written by Otway opposite," which might mean: "This is but a partial and friendly estimate written by my neighbour who lives over the way, opposite to me"; or, it might mean that "It is written by Otway—the very 'opposite' of 'a poet and a wit.'" Janus sentences are the very grace of satire, because they offer a mitigating or a complimentary construction; but in questions of conscience, ethics, or politics, uncertainty is an evil—an evil worth remembering where it can be avoided.

"Socialists" were liable to indictment who officiated in a place not licensed as a place of worship. Such a license could be obtained on making a declaration on oath that their discourses were founded on belief in the cardinal tenets of the Church. Two social speakers were summoned to swear this. One was the father of the late Robert Buchanan. He and his colleague did so swear to avoid penalties, though they swore the contrary of the truth. I joined with other colleagues in protesting against this humiliation and ignominy. And in another way imprisonment came to all of us. Silence or the oath was the alternative from which there was no escape. The question then arose, "Was the existence of Deity so certainly known to men that inability to affirm it justified exclusion from citizenship?" Thus it was of the first moment to inquire whether it was so or not, and what was regarded

as an atheistical investigation became a political necessity in self-defence. Was there such conclusive knowledge of the Unknowable as to warrant the law in making the possession of it a condition of justice and civil equality? Thus the refutation of Theism became a form of self-defence, and without foreseeing it, or intending it, or wishing it, I was, without any act of my own, engaged in it.

This narrative concerns those who deplore the rise and popularity of independent thinkers, alien to received doctrine. Few persons are aware how or why agnostic advocacy was welcomed and extended. Surely this is worth remembering. The tenet bore statute fruit, for the Affirmation Act came out of it.

It will be a satisfaction to students of spiritual progress to know that the extension and legalisation of the rights of conscience, brought no irreverence with it. The sense that the nature of Deity was beyond the capacity of dogmatism to define, created a feeling of profound humility in the mind; the incapacity which disabled me from asserting the infinite premises of Theism rendered denial an equal temerity. What tongue can speak, what eye can see, what imagination can conceive the marvels of the Inscrutable? I think of Deity as I think of Time, which is with us daily. Who can explain to us that mystery? Time—noiseless, impalpable, yet absolute — marshals the ever-

lasting procession of nature. It touches us in the present with the hand of Eternity, and we know it only by finding that we were changed as it passed by us.

CHAPTER XLIV

DIFFICULTY OF KNOWING MEN

Events of the mind as well as of travel may be worth remembering. Columbus, high on a peak of Darien, saw an unexpected sight—never to be forgotten. Of another kind, as far as surprise was concerned, though infinitely less important in other respects, was my first reading of a passage of Pascal, which more than any other revealed to me a new world of human life. The passage was the well-known exclamation :—

"What an enigma is man? What a strange, chaotic and contradictory being? Judge of all things, feeble earth-worm, depository of the Truth, mass of uncertainty, glory and butt of the universe, incomprehensible monster! In truth, what is man in the midst of Nature? A cypher in respect to the infinite; all, in comparison with nonentity: a mean betwixt nothing and all."

Everybody knows that not only in different nations, but in the same nation, mankind present a strange variety of qualities and passions. The

English are outspoken, the Scotch reticent, the Irish uncertain, the American alert, the French ceremonial. Even our English counties have their special ways of action. London is confident, Birmingham dogged, Manchester resolute, Newcastle-on-Tyne has greater modesty and greater pride than any other place. Yes; every one agrees with Pascal that man is a bewildering creature. He is proud and abject, generous and mean, defiant and craven, standing up for inflexible truth, and lying in his daily life. As Byron says, "Man is half dust, half deity." If we go far enough in our search we find people of all qualities. Everybody sees these characteristics of countries and classes. Everybody recognises these conflicting elements of character in a race; but what amazed me was to perceive that they are to be found in *each* person in varying proportion and force—they are all there. The varieties of the race are to be found in the same individual. No man who understands this ever looks upon society as he did before. Not knowing this fact, not calculating upon it, error, distrust, disappointment, estrangement, grow up needlessly.

Twice within the public recollection, two political parties in England have been formed, and made furious by a common ignorance. During the great Slave War in America, the Southern planter was held up as a gentleman of polished manners, of cultivated tastes, a paternal master and courteous

host. By others he was described as selfish, sensual, tyrannical, with whom any guest who betrayed sympathy with slaves had an unpleasant time. Both accounts were true. The same model gentleman who showered upon you courtly attentions would tar and feather you if he found you display emotion when you heard the shriek of the slave under the whip. Later, Parliament, the press, and the Church were divided upon the character of the Turk. One party said he was tolerant, picturesque, abounding in concessions and hospitality. The other party described him as subtle, evasive, treacherous, vicious, and cruel. No one seemed to recognise that all the while he was both these things. He was an adept in personal deference, generous in professions, evasive and treacherous—in short, "Abdul the Damned." To those from whom the Sultan had anything to hope, his graciousness was superb—to those at his mercy he was rapacious and murderous.

The Circassians will offer their daughters to the Turk—they send their virgin beauty into the market of lust, and then fight for the purchasers. The Hindoos seem a gentle, unresisting, rice-minded people; yet have such capacity of heroic and vigilant reticence, that though we have been masters of India for one hundred and fifty years, it is said by experienced officials, we do not know the real mind of a single man. The Zulus have savage instincts and habits; but they are honest,

speak the truth, and despise a man who is angry or excited.

Thiers, the great French statesman, had trust in individuals, but despised the masses. Yet the masses pulled down the Bastile, where only gentlemen were imprisoned and not themselves. The masses were moved by a generous dislike of oppression as strongly as Thiers himself.

President Washington, looking only at the corruption of classes he came in contact with, predicted evil to the future of American society. Yet, one hundred years after, a latent nobleness of sentiment appeared, which gave a million of lives in order that black men with large feet, as was scornfully said, should be free.

Because oppression had made, for years, assassination frequent in Italy, many thought every man carried a stiletto, and did not know that Italians are more patient and cooler-headed on great occasions than Englishmen or Frenchmen.

The Irish do not conceal that they are our enemies, and ruin every English movement in which they mingle, yet who have such brightness, drollery of imagination as they? Or who will stand by a friend of their country at the peril of their lives without hesitation as they do?

The Scotch display in contest a sort of divine ferocity, such as we read of in the Old Testament. Their battle song at Flodden ran thus :—

"Burn their women, lean and ugly,
Burn their children, great and small,
In the hut and in the palace,
Prince and peasant—burn them all.
Plunge them in the swelling torrents
With their gear and with their goods;
Spare—while breath remains—no Saxon,
Drown them in the roaring floods."

The Irish could not excel this rage of hell. Yet the same race gave us Burns and Sir Walter Scott, which no seer would have predicted or any would believe. The Scotch have deliberate generosity. Though narrow in piety they are broad in politics and have veracity in their bones.

It concerns us to notice that in every *individual* there is the same variety of qualities which exist in the race. Not to understand this is to misunderstand everybody with whom we come in contact. Take the case of a man in whom personal ambition predominates. That implies the existence of other qualities which may be even estimable, though subordinated to ends of power. William, the Norman Conqueror, had a gracious manner to any who lent themselves to further his ends; but, as Tennyson tells us, he was "stark as Death to those who crossed him." The first Napoleon gave thrones to generals who would occupy them in his interest, or as his instruments. The third Napoleon was very courteous even to workmen, so long as he believed they would be on his side in the streets; but their throats were not safe in the corridor out-

side his audience chamber, if he distrusted them. This unexpected blandishment confused the strong brain of John Arthur Roebuck, who, under the influence of Bonapartean courtesy, forgot that he had become Emperor by perjury and murder. A man caring above all things for power will give anything to acquire it or hold it. If any one will help him even to plunder others, he will share the plunder with a liberal hand among his confederates, who proclaim him as a most amiable, generous, and disinterested gentleman. To them he is so. The political world and private life also abounds in men who, like Byron's captain, was the "best-mannered gentleman who ever scuttled a ship or cut a throat." There are very few who say as Byron elsewhere wrote :—

"I wish men to be free,
From Kings or mobs—from you or me."

The point of importance is that in judging a man we should accustom ourselves to see all about him, and, while we hate the evil, not shut our eyes to what there may be of good in the same person.

For objects of popularity men will encounter peril in promoting measures of public utility, and though they care more for themselves than for the public, the public profit by their ambition. Provided it is understood that these advocates are not to be depended upon any longer than it answers their purpose, nobody is discouraged when they

take up with something else, which better serves their ends.

Men like Mr. Gladstone have a passion for conscience in politics; or, like Mr. Bright, have a passion for justice in public affairs; or, like Mr. Mill, have a passion for truth; or, like Mr. Cobden, who had a passion for national prosperity founded on freedom and peace—will encounter labour and obloquy with courage, and regard applause only as a happy accident, caring mainly for the consciousness of duty done. However, this class of men are not numerous, but command honour when known.

Men of the average sort very much resemble fishes, except that they are less quiet and not so graceful in their movements. There is the Pholas Dactylus, which resembles a small, animated sausage with a pudding head. His plan of life is to bore a perfectly tubular passage in the soft sand rock on the sea-side, and lie there with his cunning head at the mouth of his dwelling and snap up the smaller creatures who wander heedlessly by. Sometimes a near relative has made a dwelling-place at right angles to the direction in which he has elected to make his residence. He does not consult the rights or convenience of any one, but bores straight through his father or his mother-in-law. There are many persons who do the same thing. There is the subtle and picturesque devil fish, who hides

himself in the sedge and opens his mouth like a railway tunnel. With the fishing-rod which Nature attaches to his nose, the end of which is contrived like a bait, he switches the bright water until fish run forward, when he draws it cleverly up, and the foolish, impetuous, and unobservant creatures rush down his cavernous and treacherous throat. He offers a bait, not to feed them, but to feed himself. If people had only eyes to see, there are devil fish about in the sedges of daily life—political, clerical, and social. There is the octopus, with its long, aimless arms, as silent and lifeless as seaweed. It lies about as idle, as soft, as flexible, and as easy as error, or intemperance, or dishonesty. But let any edible thing approach it, and every limb starts into energy, every fibre is alive, every muscle contracts, and the thing seized dies in its inextricable and iron arms. People abound of the octopus species, and it is prudent to avoid them. However, the bad are not so many as are supposed. Yet, when we consider that, upon a moderate calculation, a fool a day is born—and doubtless a knave a day to keep him company—there must be some dubious people about.

A common mistake is that of taking offence at some unpleasant quality, and never looking to see whether there be not others for which we may tolerate and even respect a man. A person is often judged by a single quality, and sometimes

by a single word. Persons who have lived long years in amity take offence at one expression. It may be uttered in passion ; it may be spoken in mere lightness of heart, with no intention and no idea of offending—yet it enters into the foolish blood of those who hear it, and poisons the mind evermore. Nevertheless every man who reflects knows that those are fortunate and even miraculously skilful people, who can always say exactly what they intend to say, and no more. What resource of language—what insight of the minds of others—what mastery of phrases—what subtlety of discrimination—what perspicuity of statement must he possess who can express his every idea with such unerring accuracy that no word shall be redundant, or deficient, or ambiguous; and that another shall understand the speaker precisely as he understands himself! Yet by a chance phrase what friendships have been severed—what enmity has arisen—what estrangements, even in households, have occurred from these small and incidental causes ? All memory of the tenderness, the kindness, the patient and generous service of years is often obliterated by a single word! The error people make is—that everything said is intended. Yet out of the many qualities every man has, and by which any man may be moved, a single passion may go mad in a mind unwatchful. Not only hatred or anger, but love will go mad and commit murder, which is often but the insanity

of a minute. Yet nobody remembers that all are liable to insanity of speech.

What a wonderful thing is perfection! It must be very rare. Yet some people are always looking for it in others who never offer any example of it in themselves. It is not, however, to be had anywhere. All we are entitled to look for is that the good in any individual shall in some general way predominate over the bad. We have need to be thankful if we find this. The late George Peabody was not a mean man, though he would stand in the rain at Charing Cross, waiting for a cheap omnibus to the City. There was a three-penny one waiting, but one with a twopenny fare would come up soon—Mr. Peabody would wait for it. Making money was the habit of his mind, and he made it in the street as well as the office, and having made it, gave it away with a more than royal hand.

One Sunday I rode in a Miles Platting tram car, amid decorous, well-dressed chapel-going people—several of them young and active. A child fell out of the tram, whose mother was too feeble to follow it. No one moved, save a woman of repulsive expression, with whom any one might suppose her neighbours had a bad time. She seemed the least desirable person to know of all the passengers; yet this woman, on seeing the child lying in the road, at once leapt out of the tram, brought the child back and put it tenderly

into its mother's arms. Intrepid humanity may dwell in a very rough exterior.

There goes a man with a hard, forbidding face, and a headachy Evangelical complexion. Like the man mentioned in the last paper, he is not an alluring person to know—those at his fireside have a dreary time of it. His children have joyless Sundays. He is a street preacher. His voice is harsh and painful. He howls "glad tidings" at the street corner. He is wanting in the first elements of reverence—those of modesty and taste. Yet this same man has kindness and generosity in his heart. After his hard day's work is done he will give the evening, which others spend in pleasure, to try and save some casual soul in the street.

Though we continually forget it, we know that men are full of mixed qualities and unequal passions. Ignorance of this renders one of the noblest passages of Shakespeare dangerous if misapplied:

> "To thine own self be true,
> And it must follow as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

But what is a man's "own self"? It all lies there. Tell the liar, the thief, the forger, or the ruffian to be true to himself, and any one knows what will follow. Polonius knew the heart of Laertes, and to him he could say, "to thine own

self be true." We must be sure of the nature of him whom we advise to follow himself.[1]

What is or what can be the object of education but to strengthen by precept, habit and environment the better qualities of human nature; and to divert, repress, or subordinate where we cannot extinguish hereditary, unethical tendencies? Though we deny—or do not steadily see—that nations as well as individuals have capacities for good as well as evil, we admit it when we attempt to create international influences, which shall promote civilisation.

If any would avoid the disappointment of ignorance and the alarms of the foolish, let him learn to look with unamazed expectancy at what will appear on the ocean of Society. Do not look in men for the qualities you want to find, or for qualities you imagine they ought to have, but look with unexpectant eyes for what you can find. Do not expect perfection, but a few good points only, and be glad if you find them, and be tolerant of what is absent. Of him of this way of thinking it may be said, as was said of Charles Lamb: "He did not merely love his friends in spite of their errors, he loved them errors and all." Whoever remains under the delusion that nations and men possess only special qualities, and not all qualities

[1] Cicero appears to have thought of this when he said: "Every man ought carefully to follow out his peculiar character, provided it is only peculiar, and not vicious."

in different stages of development, will hate them foolishly, praise them without reason, and will never know men. But whoever understands the trend of things in this ever-changing, uncontrollable world, where

> "Our fate comes to us from afar,
> Where others made us what we are,"

will utter the prayer of Sadi, the Persian poet: "O God! have pity on the wicked, for Thou hast done everything for the good in having made them good." A prayer worth remembering.

CHAPTER XLV

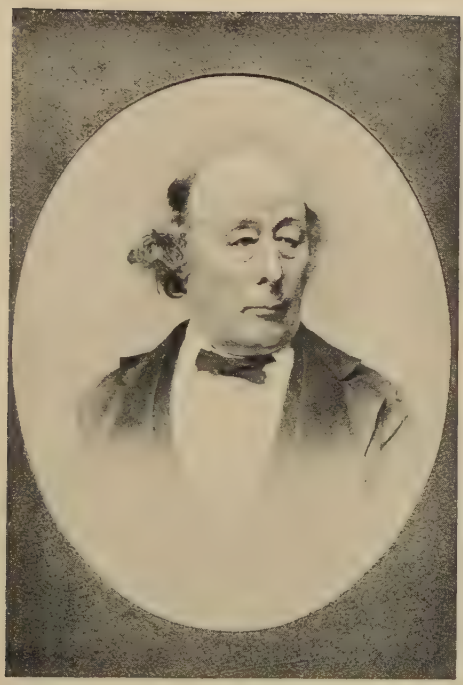
IDEAS FOR THE YOUNG

THERE are people who live many years and never grow old. We call them "young patriarchs." Limit not the golden dreams of youth, which, however, would be none the worse for a touch of the patriarch in them. There is sense in youth, and it will assimilate the experience of age if displayed before rather than thrust upon it. Youth should be incited to think for itself, and to select from the wisdom it finds in the world. Then the question comes—what is safe to take? That is the time for words of suggestion. Every one has read of the fox, who seeing a crow with a piece of cheese in her bill, told her "she had a splendid voice, and did herself an injustice by not singing." The credulous crow began a note, dropped the piece of cheese, with which the fox ran away. This trick is always being played. Among young persons there are a great number of crows. A youth is given a situation where advancement goes with assiduity. A fox-headed comrade or clerk below him tells him his

"work is beneath his talents, and he ought to get something better." Discontent breeds negligence. He loses his place, when the treacherous prompter, whom he took to be his friend, slips into his situation, and finds it quite satisfactory.

In public affairs, in which youth seldom takes part, many are confused by pretences which they understand when too late. A person puts forward an excellent project, and finds it assailed and disparaged by some one he thought would support it. Discouraged by opposition, he comes to doubt the validity of the enterprise he had in hand. When he has abandoned it he finds it taken up by the very person who denounced it, and who claims credit for what he has opposed. All the while he has thought highly of the scheme, but wanted to have the credit of it himself, and therefore defamed it until he could get it into his own hands. This sort of thing is done in Parliament as well as in business. It is only by listening to the experience of others that youth can acquire wariness and guard against serious mistakes.

The young on entering life are often dismayed by dolorous speeches by persons who have never comprehended the nature of the world in which they find themselves. People are told "a great crisis in public affairs is at hand." There never was a time in the history of the world when a "crisis" was not at hand. Nature works by crises. Progress is made up of crises through which mankind has



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passed. Again there breaks forth upon the ears of inexperienced youth the alarming information that society is "in a transition state." Every critic, every preacher, every politician, is always saying this. Yet there never was a time when society was not in a "transition state." According to the Genesian legend, Adam discovered this in his day, when, a few weeks after his advent, he found himself outside the gates of Paradise, and all the world and all the creatures in it thrown into a state of unending perturbation and discomfort which has not ceased to this day. The eternal condition of human life is change, and he who is wise learns early to adapt himself to it. As Dr. Arnold said, there is nothing so dangerous as standing still when all the world is moving.

The young are bewildered by being left under the impression that they should learn everything. Whereas all they need is to know thoroughly what their line of duty in life requires them to know. No man can read all the books in the British Museum, were arrangements made for his sleeping there. No one is expected to eat all he finds in the market, but only so much as makes a reasonable meal. Lord Sherbrooke translated from the Greek guiding lines of Homer who said of a learner of his day :—

"He could not reap, he could not sow,
Nor was he wise at all:
For very many arts he knew,
But badly knew them all."

The conditions of personal advancement can only be learned by observing the steps of those who have succeeded. Disraeli, whose success was the wonder of his time, owed it to following the shrewd maxim that he who wants to advance must make himself necessary to those whom he has the opportunity of serving. This can be done in any station in life by skill, assiduity and trustworthiness.

Practical thoroughness is an essential quality which gives great advantage in life. Spurgeon had a great appreciation of it. A servant girl applied to him for a situation on the ground that she "had got religion." "Yes," said the great pulpit orator, "that is a very good thing if it takes a useful turn; but do you sweep under the mats?" he asked, cleanliness being a sign of godliness in the eyes of the sensible preacher.

Cleanliness is possible to the very poorest—walls which have no paper might have whitewash. Children should never see dirt anywhere. They should never come upon it lying out of sight. Fever and death lurk in neglected corners. Children may be in rags, but if they are clean rags and the children are clean, they are, however poor, respectable. When I first went to speak in Glasgow, it was in a solemn old hall, up a wynd. The place was in the Candleriggs. Everybody knows what a dark, clammy, pasty, muddy, depressing thoroughfare is the Candleriggs in wintry weather.

The passage leading to the lecture hall and the

steps which had to be ascended were all murky and dirty; as in those days the passage leading to the publishing house of the Chambers Brothers was, as I have seen it, an incentive to sickness. My payment for lecturing was not much, but out of it I gave half a crown to an active woman I found in the wynd to wash down the stairs and the passage leading to the Candleriggs, and the space as wide as the passage along the causeway to the curb-stone. People passing along might see signs of cleanliness leading to the hall.

I never forget what the woman said to some of the assembly as they passed by her: "I don't know what this man (or "mon") is, who you have to lecture to you to-day, but at least he has clean principles." That was precisely the impression I wanted to create. My tenets might be poor, my arguments badly clothed, but to present them in a clean state was in my power.

Do not readily be deterred from a good cause because you will be told it is unprofitable, but take sides with it if need be. You will find persons born with a passion of putting the world to rights. A very good passion for the world, but now and then a very bad thing for him who is moved by it. They have no engagement to undertake that work, no salary is allotted for it, nor even any income coming in to pay expenses "out of pocket," as the prudent, open-eyed lawyer puts it. Nevertheless, it may be well to follow the Jewish rule of giving a

tithe of your time to the public service. There are a large amount of tithes contributed in other ways which are not half so beneficial to mankind. Many whose names now are luminous in history, whose fame is on every tongue, have been personally known to the old. The magical notes of great singers the living can never know, the triumphs of the great masters of speech in Parliament and on the platform, whom it was an education to hear—only the old can recount. What they looked like, and how they played their memorable parts, are the enchanting secrets of the old, who tell to the young what passed in a world unknown to them, and which has made them what they are.

The purport of this chapter is to stimulate individuality and self-reliance. Disraeli's maxim of self-advancement was to make himself necessary by service in the sphere in which he found himself. In public affairs committees are not, as a rule, suggestive; they can amend what is submitted to them; they originate nothing, and generally take the soul out of any proposal brought before them. If they advance business it is when some individual provides a plan to which their consent may be of importance. Individual ideas have been the immemorial source of progress. A committee of one will often effect more than a committee of ten; but the committee of ten will multiply the force of the one, and lend to it influence and authority. Seeing that ideas come from individuals, a young person cannot do better

in life than by considering himself a committee of one, and ponder himself on every matter of importance. This gives a habit of resourceful thought — renders him cautious in action, and educates him in responsibility. In daily life a man has continually to decide things for himself without the aid of a committee. It is thus that self-trust becomes his strength.

If youth could see but a little with the eyes of their seniors, some pleasures would seem less alluring, and they would avoid doing some things which they will regret all their lives. Now and then some young eye will glance at a page of bygone lore and see a gleam of inspiration, like a torch in a forest, which reveals a bear in a bush which he had chosen for a picnic, or discovers a bog which he had taken to be solid ground. Proverbs come around the young observer, so fair seeming he trusts them on sight, and does not know they are only in part guiding and in part elusive, and have limitations which may betray him into confident and futile extremes. Even professors will beguile him with statements which he doubts not are true, and finds, all too late, that they are false.

He will hear forebodings which fill him with alarm at some new undertaking, not knowing that they are but the sounds of the footfalls of Progress, which every generation has heard, the ignorant with terror, and the wise with gladness. Only the relation of bygone experiences can save

the young from perilous illusions. Of course, youth is always asked to look at things with the eyes of age, but they never do. They never can do it, because the eyes of the old look at things with the light of experience which, in the nature of things, youth is without. Nevertheless, the experience of others may be good reading for them.

If in the generous eagerness of youth the heart inclines to a forlorn hope, take it up notwithstanding its difficulties, for if youth does not, older people are not likely to attempt it. The older are mostly too prudent to do any good in the way of new enterprise. This is where youth has its uses and its priceless advantage. However, it is well not to let enthusiasm, noble as it may be, blind the devotee. Take care that the cause espoused is sound. Take heed of the Japanese maxim, "It is no use mending the lid, if the pot be broken."

CHAPTER XLVI

EXPERIENCES ON THE WARPATH

The late Archbishop of Canterbury spoke derisively of agitators. The Rev. Stewart Headlam asked whether "Paul, and even our Lord Himself, were not agitators." Mr. Headlam might have asked, where would the Archbishop be but for that superb, irrepressible agitator Luther? The agitator is a public advocate who speaks when others are silent. Mr. C. D. Collet, of whom I here write, was an agitator who understood his business.

Agitation for the public welfare is a feature of civilisation. In a despotic land it works by what means it can. In a free country it seeks its ends by agencies within the limits of law. The mastery of the means left open for procuring needful change, the right use, and the full use of these facilities, constitute the business of an agitator.

For more than fifty years I was associated with Mr. Collet in public affairs, and I never knew any one more discerning than he in choosing a public cause, or on promoting it with greater plenitude of

resource. Many a time he has come to my house at midnight to discuss some new point he thought important. A good secretary is the inspirer of the movement he represents. Mr. Collet habitually sought the opinion of those for whom he acted. Every letter and every document was laid before them. On points of policy or terms of expression he deferred to the views of others, not only with acquiescence, but willingness. During the more than twenty-four years in which I was chairman of the Travelling Tax Abolition Committee and he was secretary, I remember no instance to the contrary of his ready deference. His fertility of suggestion was a constant advantage. Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden (who had an instinct of fitness) would select the most suitable for the purpose in hand. In early life Mr. Collet had studied for the law, and retained a passion for it which proved very useful where Acts of Parliament were the barricades which had to be stormed.

Mr. Collet was educated at Bruce Castle School, conducted by the father of Sir Rowland Hill. Collet's political convictions were shown by his becoming secretary for the People's Charter Union, intended to restore the Chartist movement (then mainly under Irish influence) to English hands. In 1848, he and W. J. Linton were sent as deputies to Paris, as bearers of English congratulations on the establishment of the Republic. Afterwards he fell himself under the fascination of an Oriental-minded

diplomat, David Urquhart, and became a romantic Privy Council loyalist. Mr. Urquhart was Irish, eloquent, dogmatic, and infallible—at least, he put down with ostentatious insolence any one who ventured to demur to anything he said. If the astounded questioner pleaded that he was ignorant of the facts adduced, he was told his ignorance was a crime. Mr. Urquhart believed that all wisdom lay in treaties and Blue Books, and that the first duty of every politician was to insist on beheading Lord Palmerston, who had betrayed England to Russia. How Mr. Collet—a lover of freedom and inquiry—could be subjugated by doctrines which, if not conceived in madness, were commanded by arts akin to madness, is the greatest mystery of conversion I have known. I have seen Mr. Bright come out of the House of Commons, and observing Mr. Collet, would advance and offer his hand, when Mr. Collet would put his hands behind him, saying "he could not take the hand of a man who knew Lord Palmerston was an impostor and ought to know he was a traitor, and still maintained political relations with him." Yet Mr. Collet had great and well-founded regard for Mr. Bright.

It was an intrepid undertaking to attempt a repeal of taxes which for 143 years had fettered, as they were designed to do, knowledge from reaching the people. The history of this achievement was given in the *Weekly Times and Echo.* While these taxes were in force, neither cheap newspapers nor cheap

books could exist. Since their repeal great newspapers and great publishing houses have arisen. While these Acts were in force every newspaper proprietor was treated as a blasphemer and a writer of sedition, and compelled to give securities of £300 against the exercise of his infamous tendencies; every paper-maker was regarded as a thief, and the officers of the Excise dogged every step of his business with hampering, exacting, and humiliating suspicion. Every reader found with an unstamped paper in his possession was liable to a fine of £20. The policy of our agitation was to observe scrupulous fairness to every Government with which we came in contact, and to heads of departments with whom unceasing war was waged. Their personal honour was never confused with the mischievous Acts they were compelled to enforce. Our rule was steadfastness in fairness and courtesy.

The cardinal principle of agitation Collet maintained was that the most effectual way to obtain the repeal of a bad law was to insist upon it being carried out, when its effect would soon be resented by those who maintain its application to others. Charles Dickens' "Household Narrative of Current Events," published weekly, was a violation of the Act which required news to be a month old when published on unstamped paper. Dickens was not selected from malice, for he was friendly to the freedom of the press, but from policy, as an Act carried out which would ruin a popular favourite

like Dickens, would excite indignation against it. A clamour was raised by friends in Parliament against the supineness of the Inland Revenue Board, for tolerating a wealthy metropolitan offender, while it prosecuted and relentlessly ruined small men in the provinces for doing the same thing. Bright called attention in the House to the Electric Telegraph Company, who were advertising every night in the lobbies news, not an hour old, on unstamped paper, in violation of the law.

It took thirty years of supplication to get art galleries open on Sunday, when the application of the law to the privilege of the rich would have opened them in ten years. The rich are allowed to violate the law against working on Sundays, for which the poor man is fined and imprisoned. An intelligent committee on the Balfour-Chamberlain principle of Retaliation would soon put an end to the laws which hamper the progress.

Professor Alexander Bain, remarkable for his fruitfulness in philosophic device, asked my opinion on a project of constructing a barometer of personal character, which varies by time and event. Everybody is aware of somebody who has changed, but few notice that every one is changing daily, for better or for worse. What Bain wanted was to contrive some instrument by which these variations could be denoted.

No doubt men must be judged on the balance of their ascertained merits. Bishop Butler's maxim that "Probability is the guide of life," implies proportion, and is the rule whereby character is to be judged. For years I conceived a strong dislike of Sir Robert Peel, because, as Secretary of State, he refused the petition of Mrs. Carlile to be allowed to leave the prison (where she ought never to have been sent) before the time of her accouchement. Peel's refusal was unfeeling and brutal. Yet in after life it was seen that Sir Robert possessed great qualities, and made great sacrifices in promoting the public good; and I learned to hold in honour one whom I had hated for half a century.

For many years I entertained an indifferent estimate of Sir William Harcourt. It began when my friend Mr. E. J. H. Craufurd, M.P., challenged him to a duel, which he declined—justifiably it might be, as he was a larger man than his antagonist, and offered a wider surface for bullets. Declining was meritorious in my eyes, as duels had then a political prestige, and there was courage in refusing. The cause of the challenge I thought well founded. In the earlier years of Sir William's Parliamentary life I had many opportunities of observing him, and thought he appeared as more contented with himself than any man is entitled to be on this side of the Millennium. When member for Oxford as a Liberal, he declared against payment of members of Parliament on the ground of

expense. The expense would have been one halfpenny a year to each elector. This seemed to me so insincere that I ceased to count him as a Liberal who could be trusted. Yet all the while he had great qualities as a combatant of the highest order, in the battles of Liberalism, who sacrificed himself, lost all prospect of higher distinction, and incurred the undying rage of the rich (who have Canning's "ignorant impatience" of taxation) by instituting death duties, services which entitled him to honour and regard.

I heard Lord Salisbury's acrid, sneering, insulting, contemptuous speeches in the House of Commons against working men seeking the franchise. What gave this man the right to speak with bitterness and scorn of the people whose industry kept him in the opulence he so little deserved? Some friends of mine, who had personal intercourse with him, described him as a fair-spoken gentleman. All the while, and to the end of his days, he had the cantankerous tongue in diplomacy which brought contempt and distrust upon Englishmen abroad, while his jests at Irish members of Parliament, whom his Government had subjected to humiliation in prison, denoted, thought many, the innate savagery of his order, when secure from public retribution—which people should remember who continue its impunity. Difference of opinion is to be respected, but it is difficult even for philosophy to condone scorn. If recklessness in language be the

mark of inferiority in workmen, what is it in those of high position who compromise a nation by their ungoverned tongues?

Among things bygone are certain ideas of popular influence which have had their day—some too long a day, judging from their effects. The general misconceptions in them still linger in some minds, and it may be useful to recall a prominent one.

The madness of thoroughness are two words I have never seen brought together, yet they are allied oftener than most persons suppose. Thoroughness, in things which concern others, has limits. Justness is greater than thoroughness. There is great fascination in being thorough. A man should be thorough as far as he can. This implies that he must have regard to the rights and reasonable convenience of others, which is the natural limit of all the virtues. Sometimes a politician will adopt the word "thorough" as his motto, forgetful that it was the motto of Strafford, who was a despot on principle, and who perished through the terror which his success inspired. Cromwell was thorough in merciless massacres, which have made his name hateful in Irish memory for three centuries, perpetuating the distrust of English rule. Vigour is a notable attribute, but unless it stops short of rigour, it jeopardises itself.

Thorough means the entire carrying out of a principle to its end. This can rarely be done in human affairs. When a person finds he cannot do all he would, he commonly does nothing, whereas his duty is to do what he can—to continue to assert and maintain the principle he thinks right, and persist in its application to the extent of his power. To suspend endeavour at the point where persistence would imperil the just right of others, is the true compromise in which there is no shame, as Mr. John Morley, in his wise book on "Compromise," has shown. Temperance—a word of infinite wholesomeness in every department of life, because it means use and restraint—has been retarded and rendered repellent to thousands by the "thorough" partisans who have put prohibition into it. Can absolute prohibition be enforced universally where conviction is opposed, without omnipresent tyranny, which makes it hateful instead of welcome? Even truth itself, the golden element of trust and progress, has to be limited by relevance, timeliness and utility. He who would speak everything he knows or believes to be true, to all persons, at all times, in every place, would soon become the most intolerable person in every society, and make lying itself a relief. A man should stand by the truth and act upon it, wherever he can, and he should be known by his fidelity to it. But that is a very different thing from obtruding it in unseemly ways, in season and out of season, which has ruined many a noble

cause. The law limits its exaction of truth to evidence necessary for justice. There are cases, such as occurred during the Civil War of emancipation in America, where slave-hunters would demand of the man, who had seen a fugitive slave, pass by, "which way he had run." The humane bystander questioned, would point in the opposite direction. Had he pointed truly, it would have cost the slave his life. This was lying for humanity, and it would be lying to call it by any other name, for it *was* lying. Thoroughness would have murdered the fugitive.

The thoroughness of the Puritans brought upon the English nation the calamities of the Restoration. Richelieu, in France, was thorough in his policy of centralisation. He was a butcher on principle, and his name became a symbol of murder. He circumvented everything, and pursued every one with implacable ferocity, who was likely to withstand him. He put to death persons high and low, he destroyed municipalism in France, and changed the character of political society for the worse. The French Revolutionists did but tread in the footsteps of the political priest. They were all thorough, and as a consequence they died by each other's hands, and ruined liberty in France and in Europe. The gospel of thoroughness was preached by Carlyle and demoralised Continental Liberals. In the revolution of 1848 they spared lives all round. They even abolished the punishment of death.

But when Louis Napoleon applied the doctrine of "thorough" to the greatest citizens of Paris, and shot, imprisoned, or exiled statesmen, philosophers and poets, Madame Pulzsky said to me, the "Republicans thought their leniency a mistake, and if they had power again they would cut everybody's throat who stood in the way of liberty." As usual, thoroughness had begotten ferocity.

Carlyle's eminent disciples of thoroughness justified the massacre and torture of the blacks in Jamaica, for which Tennyson, Kingsley, and others defended Governor Eyre. Lord Cardwell, in the House of Commons, admitted in my hearing that there had been "unnecessary executions." "Unnecessary executions" are murders—but in thoroughness unnecessary executions are not counted. Wherever we have heard of pitilessness in military policy, or in speeches in our Parliament, we see exemplifications of the gospel of Thoroughness, which is madness if not limited by justice and forbearance.

Conventional thoroughness dwells in extremes. If political economy was thoroughly carried out, there might be great wealth, but no happiness. Enjoyment is waste, since it involves expenditure. The Inquisition, which made religion a name of terror, was but thoroughness in piety. Pope, himself a Catholic, warned us that—

> "For virtue's self may too much zeal be had.
> The worst of madness is a saint run mad."

Fanatics forget (they would not be fanatics if they remembered) that in public affairs, true thoroughness is limited by the rights of others. There is no permanent progress without this consideration. The best of eggs will harden if boiled too much. The mariner who takes no account of the rocks, wrecks his ship — which it is not profitable to forget.

It is natural that those who crave practical knowledge of the unseen world should look about the universe for some chink, through which they can see what goes on there, and believe they have met with truants who have made disclosures to them. I have no commerce of that kind to relate. It is hard to think that when Jupiter is silent—when the Head of the Gods speaketh not—that He allows angels with traitor tongues to betray to men the mysteries of the world He has Himself concealed. Can it be that He permits wayward ghosts to creep over the boundary of another world and babble His secrets at will? This would imply great lack of discipline at the outposts of paradise. There is great fascination in clandestine communication with the kingdom of the dead. I own that noises of the night, not heard in the day, seem supernatural. The wind sounds like the rush of the disembodied—hinges creak with human emotion—winds moan against window panes like persons in pain. Creatures of the air and earth flit or leap in pursuit of prey, like the shadows of

ghosts or the furtive steps of murdered souls. Are they more than

> "The sounds sent down at night
> By birds of passage in their flight"?

For believing less where others believe more, for expressing decision of opinion which the reader may resent, I do but follow in the footsteps of Confucius, who, as stated by Allen Upward, "declared that a principle of belief or even a rule of morality binding on himself need not bind a disciple whose own conscience did not enjoin it on him." Confucius, says his expositor, thus "reached a height to which mankind have hardly yet lifted their eyes, and announced a freedom compared with which ours is an empty name."

CHAPTER XLVII

LOOKING BACKWARDS

It seems to me that I cannot more appropriately conclude these chapters of bygone events within my own experience, than by a summary of those of the past condition of industry which suggest a tone of manly cheerfulness and confidence in the future, not yet common among the people. Changes of condition are not estimated as they pass, and when they have passed, many never look back to calculate their magnificence or insignificance. This chapter is an attempt to show the change of the environment of a great class of a character to decrease apprehension and augment hope. The question answered herein is: "Did things go better before our time?"

When this question is put to me I answer "No." Things did not go better before my time—nor that of the working class who were contemporaries of my earlier years. My answer is given from the working class point of view, founded on a personal experience extending as far back as 1824, when I first became familiar with workshops. Many

are still under the impression that things are as bad as they well can be, whereas they have been much worse than they are now. When I first took an interest in public affairs, agitators among the people were as despondent as frogs who were supposed to croak because they were neglected.

They spoke in weeping tones. There were tears even in the songs of Ebenezer Elliot, the Corn-Law Rhymer, [1] and not without cause, for the angels would have been pessimists, had they been in the condition of the people in those days. I myself worked among men who had Unitarian masters—who were above the average of employers—even they were as sheep-dogs who kept the wolf away, but bit the sheep if they turned aside. But Trades Unions have changed this now, and sometimes bite their masters (employers they are called now), which is not more commendable. Still, multitudes of working people, who ought to be in the front ranks as claimants for redress still needed, yet hang back with handkerchief to their eyes, oppressed with a feeling of hopelessness, because they are unaware of what has been won for them, of what

[1] Thomas Cooper—himself a Chartist poet—published (1841) in Elliot's days a hymn by William Jones—a Leicester poet—of which the first verse began thus:

> "Come my fellow-slaves of Britain.
> Rest, awhile, the weary limb;
> Pour your plaints, ye *bosom-smitten*,
> In a sad and solemn hymn."

has been conceded to them, and what the trend of progress is bringing nearer to them.

Of course if there has been no betterment in the condition of the people, despair is excusable—but if there has, despair is as unseemly as unnecessary. Every age has its needs and its improvements to make, but a knowledge of what has been accomplished should take despair out of workmen's minds. To this end I write of changes which have taken place in my time.

I was born in tinder-box days. I remember having to strike a light in my grandfather's garden for his early pipe, when we arrived there at five o'clock in the morning. At times my fingers bled as I missed the steel with the jagged flint. Then the timber proved damp where the futile spark fell, and when ignition came a brimstone match filled the air with satanic fumes. He would have been thought as much a visionary as Joanna Southcott, who said the time would come when small, quick-lighting lucifers would be as plentiful and as cheap as blades of grass. How tardy was change in olden time! Flint and steel had been in use four hundred years. Philip the Good put it into the collar of the Golden Fleece (1429). It was not till 1833 that phosphorus matches were introduced. The safety match of the present day did not appear until 1845. The consumption of matches is now about eight per day for each person. To produce eight lights, by a tinder-box, would take a quarter

of an hour. With the lucifer match eight lights can be had in two minutes, occupying only twelve hours a year, while the tinder box process consumes ninety hours. Thus the lucifer saves nearly eighty hours annually, which, to the workman, would mean an addition of nearly eight working days to the year.

In tinder-box days the nimble night burglar heard the flint and steel going, and had time to pack up his booty and reach the next parish, before the owner descended the stairs with his flickering candle. Does any one now fully appreciate the morality of light? Extinguish the gas in the streets of London and a thousand extra policemen would do less to prevent outrage and robbery than the ever-burning, order-keeping street light. Light is a police force —neither ghosts nor burglars like it. Thieves flee before it as errors flee the mind when the light of truth bursts on the understanding of the ignorant.

Seventy years ago the evenings were wasted in a million houses of the poor. After sundown the household lived in gloom. Children who could read, read, as I did, by the flickering light of the fire, which often limited for life the power of seeing. Now the pauper reads by a better light than the squire did in days when squires were county gods. Now old men see years after the period when their forefathers were blind.

Then a social tyranny prevailed, unpleasant to

the rich and costly to the poor, which regarded the beard as an outrage. I remember when only four men in Birmingham had courage to wear beards. They were followers of Joanna Southcott. They did it in imitation of the apostles, and were jeered at in the streets by ignorant Christians. George Frederick Muntz, one of the two first members elected in Birmingham, was the first member who ventured to wear a beard in the House of Commons; and he would have been insulted had not he been a powerful man and carried a heavy Malacca cane, which he was known to apply to any one who offered him a personal affront. Only military officers were allowed to wear a moustache; among them—no one, not even Wellington, was hero enough to wear a beard. The Rev. Edmund R. Larken, of Burton Rectory, near Lincoln, was the first clergyman (that was as late as 1852) who appeared in the pulpit with a beard, but he shaved the upper lip as an apology for the audacity of his chin; George Dawson was the first Nonconformist preacher who delivered a sermon in a full-blown moustache and beard, which was taken in both cases as an unmistakable sign of latitudinarianism in doctrine. In the bank clerk or the workman it was worse. It was flat insubordination not to shave. The penalty was prompt dismissal. As though there were not fetters about hard to bear, people made fetters for themselves. Such was the daintiness of ignorance that a man could not eat, dress, nor even think as he

pleased. He was even compelled to shave by public opinion.

When Mr. Joseph Cowen was first a candidate for Parliament, he wore, as was his custom, a felt hat (then called a "wide-awake"). He was believed to be an Italian conspirator, and suspected of holding opinions lacking in orthodox requirements. Yet all his reputed heresies of acts and tenets put together did not cost him so many votes as the form and texture of his hat. He was elected—but his headgear would have ruined utterly a less brilliant candidate than he. This social intolerance now shows its silly and shameless head no more. A wise Tolerance is the Angel, which stands at the portal of Progress, and opens the door of the Temple.

Dr. Church, of Birmingham, was the first person who, in my youth, contrived a bicycle, and rode upon it in the town, which excited more consternation than a Southcottean with his beard. He was an able physician, but his harmless innovation cost him his practice. Patients refused to be cured by a doctor who rode a horse which had no head, and ate no oats. Now a parson may ride to church on a bicycle and people think none the worse of his sermon; and, scandal of scandals, women are permitted to cycle, although it involves a new convenience of dress formerly sharply resented.

In these days of public wash-houses, public laundries, and water supply, few know the discomfort of a washing day in a workman's home, or of the

feuds of a party pump. One pump in a yard had to serve several families. Quarrels arose as to who should first have the use of it. Sir Edwin Chadwick told me that more dissensions arose over party pumps in a day than a dozen preachers could reconcile in a week. Now the poorest house has a water tap, which might be called moral, seeing the ill-feeling it prevents. So long as washing had to be done at home, it took place in the kitchen, which was also the dining-room of a poor family. When the husband came home to his meals, damp clothes were hanging on lines over his head, and dripping on to his plate. The children were in the way, and sometimes the wrong child had its ears boxed because, in the steam, the mother could not see which was which. This would give rise to further expressions which kept the Recording Angel, of whom Sterne tells us, very busy, whom the public wash-houses set free for other, though scarcely less repugnant duty.

In that day sleeping rooms led to deplorable additions to the register of "idle words." The introduction of iron bedsteads began a new era of midnight morality. As a wandering speaker I dreaded the wooden bedstead of cottage, lodging-house or inn. Fleas I did not much care for, and had no ill-will towards them. They were too little to be responsible for what they did; while the malodorous bug is big enough to know better. Once in Windsor I selected an inn with a white portico,

having an air of pastoral cleanliness. The four-poster in my room, with its white curtains, was a further assurance of repose. The Boers were not more skilful in attack and retreat than the enemies I found in the field. Lighted candles did not drive them from the kopje pillow where they fought. In Sheffield, in 1840, I asked the landlady for an uninhabited room. A cleaner looking, white-washed chamber never greeted my eyes. But I soon found that a whole battalion of red-coated cannibals were stationed there, on active service. Wooden bedsteads in the houses of the poor were the fortresses of the enemy, which then possessed the land. Iron bedsteads have ended this, and given to the workman two hours more sleep at night than was possible before that merciful invention. A gain of two hours for seven nights amounted to a day's holiday a week. Besides, these nocturnal irritations were a fruitful source of tenemental sin, from which iron bedsteads have saved residents and wayfarers.

Of all the benefits that have come to the working class in my time, those of travel are among the greatest. Transit by steam has changed the character of man, and the facilities of the world. Nothing brings toleration into the mind like seeing new lands, new people, new usages. They who travel soon discover that other people have genius, manners, and taste. The traveller loses on his way prejudices of which none could divest him at home, and he brings back in his luggage new ideas never con-

tained in it before. Think what the sea-terror of the emigrant used to be, as he thought of the dreadful voyage over the tempestuous billows. The first emigrants to America were six months in the *Mayflower*. Now a workman can go from Manchester into the heart of America or Canada in a fortnight. The deadly depression which weighed on the heart of home-sick emigrants occurs no more, since he can return almost at will. A mechanic can now travel farther than a king could a century ago. When I first went to Brighton, third-class passengers travelled in an open cattle truck, exposed to wind and rain. For years the London and North-Western Railway shunted the third-class passengers at Blisworth for two hours, while the gentlemen's trains went by. Now workmen travel in better carriages than gentlemen did half a century ago. In Newcastle-on-Tyne I have entered a third-class carriage at a quarter to five in the morning. It was like Noah's Ark. The windows were openings which in storm were closed by wooden shutters to keep out wind and rain, when all was darkness. It did not arrive in London till nine o'clock in the evening, being sixteen hours on the journey. Now the workman can leave Newcastle at ten o'clock in the morning, and be in London in the afternoon.

Does any one think what advantage has come to the poor by the extension of dentistry? Teeth are life-givers. They increase comeliness, comfort, health and length of years—advantages now shared

more or less by the poorer classes—once confined to the wealthy alone. Formerly the sight of dental instruments struck terror in the heart of the patient. Now, fear arises when few instruments are seen, as the more numerous they are and the more skilfully they are made, the assurance of less pain is given. The simple instruments which formerly alarmed give confidence now, which means that the patient is wiser than of yore.

Within the days of this generation what shrieks were heard in the hospital, which have been silenced for ever by a discovery of pain-arresting chloroform! No prayer could still the agony of the knife. The wise surgeon is greater than the priest. If any one would know what pain was in our time, let him read Dr. John Brown's "Rab and his Friends," which sent a pang of dangerous horror into the heart of every woman who read it. Now the meanest hospital gives the poorest patient who enters it a better chance of life than the wealthy could once command.

It was said formerly:—

> "The world is a market full of streets,
> And Death is a merchant whom every one meets,
> If life were a thing which money could buy—
> The poor could not live, and the rich would not die."

Now the poor man can deal with death, and buy life on very reasonable terms, if he has commonsense enough to observe half the precepts given him by generous physicians on temperance and prudence.

Not long since no man was tolerated who sought to cure an ailment, or prolong human life in any new way. Even persons so eminent as Harriet Martineau, Dr. Elliotson, and Sir Bulwer Lytton were subjected to public ridicule and resentment because they suffered themselves to be restored to health by mesmerism or hydropathy. But in these libertine and happier days any one who pleases may follow Mesmer, Pressnitz, or even Hahnemann, and attain health by any means open to him, and is no longer expected to die according to the direction of antediluvian doctors.

Until late years the poor man's stomach was regarded as the waste-paper basket of the State, into which anything might be thrown that did not agree with well-to-do digestion. Now, the Indian proverb is taken to be worth heeding—that "Disease enters by the mouth," and the health of the people is counted as part of the wealth of the nation. Pestilence is subjected to conditions. Diseases are checked at will, which formerly had an inscrutable power of defiance. The sanitation of towns is now a public care. True, officers of health have mostly only official noses, but they can be made sensible of nuisances by intelligent occupiers. Economists, less regarded than they ought to be, have proved that it is cheaper to prevent pestilence than bury the dead. Besides, disease, which has no manners, is apt to attack respectable people.

What are workshops now to what they once were? Any hole or stifling room was thought good enough for a man to work in. They, indeed, abound still, but are now regarded as discreditable. Many mills and factories are palaces now compared with what they were. Considering how many millions of men and women are compelled to pass half their lives in some den of industry or other, it is of no mean importance that improvement has set in in workshops.

Co-operative factories have arisen, light, spacious and clean, supplied with cool air in summer and warm air in winter. In my youth men were paid late on Saturday night; poor nailers trudged miles into Birmingham, with their week's work in bags on their backs, who were to be seen hanging about merchants' doors up to ten and eleven o'clock to get payment for their goods. The markets were closing or closed when the poor workers reached them. It was midnight, or Sunday morning, before they arrived at home. Twelve or more hours a day was the ordinary working period. Wages, piece-work and day-work, were cut down at will. I did not know then that these were "the good old times" of which, in after years, I should hear so much.

The great toil of other days in many trades is but exercise now, as exhaustion is limited by mechanical contrivances. A pressman in my employ has worked at a hand-press twenty-four

hours continuously, before publishing day. Now a gas engine does all the labour. Machinery is the deliverer which never tires and never grows pale.

The humiliation of the farm labourer is over. He used to sing:

> "Mr Smith is a very good man,
> He lets us ride in his harvest van,
> He gives us food and he gives us ale,
> We pray his heart may never fail."

There is nothing to be said against Mr. Smith, who was evidently a kindly farmer of his time. Yet to what incredible humiliation his "pastors and masters" had brought poor Hodge, who could sing these lines, as though he had reached the Diamond Jubilee of his life when he rode in somebody else's cart, and had cheese and beer. Now the farm workers of a co-operative way of thinking have learned how to ride in their own vans, to possess the crop with which they are loaded, and to provide themselves with a harvest supper.

In my time the mechanic had no personal credit for his work, whatever might be his skill. Now in industrial exhibitions the name of the artificer is attached to his work, and he is part of the character of the firm which employs him. He has, also, now—if co-operation prevails—a prospect of participating in the profits of his own industry. Half a century ago employers were proud of showing their

machinery to a visitor—never their men. Now they show their work-people as well—whose condition and contentment is the first pride of great firms.

Above all knowledge is a supreme improvement, which has come to workmen. They never asked for it, the ignorant never do ask for knowledge, and do not like those who propose it to them. Brougham first turned aside their repugnance by telling them what Bacon knew, that "knowledge is power." Now they realise the other half of the great saying, Dr. Creighton, the late Bishop of London, supplied, that "ignorance is impotence." They can see that the instructed son of the gentleman has power, brightness, confidence, and alertness; while the poor man's child, untrained, incapable, dull in comparison, often abject, is unconscious of his own powers which lie latent within him. If an educated and an ignorant child were sold by weight, the intelligent child would fetch more per pound avoirdupois than the ignorant one. Now education can be largely had for working men's children for nothing. Even scholarships and degrees are open to the clever sort. Moreover, how smooth science has made the early days of instruction, formerly made jagged with the rod.

Sir Edwin Chadwick showed that the child mind could not profitably be kept learning more than an hour at a time, and recreation must intervene

before a second hour can be usefully spent. What a mercy and advantage to thousands of poor children this has been! Even the dreary schoolroom of the last generation is disappearing. A schoolroom should be spacious and bright, and board schools are beginning to be made so now. I have seen a board school in a dismal court in Whitechapel which looked like an alley of hell. All thoughts for pleasant impressions in the child mind, which make learning alluring, were formerly uncared for. Happier now is the lot of poor children than any former generation knew.

Within my time no knowledge of public affairs was possible to the people, save in a second-hand way from sixpenny newspapers a month old. Now a workman can read in the morning telegrams from all parts of the world in a halfpenny paper, hours before his employer is out of bed. If a pestilence broke out in the next street to the man's dwelling, the law compelled him to wait a month for the penny paper, the only one he could afford to buy, before he became aware of his danger, and it often happened that some of his family never lived to read of their risk.

The sons of working people are now welcomed in the army, and their record there has commanded the admiration of the onlooking world. But they are not flogged as they once were, at the will of any arrogant dandy who had bought his mastership over them. Intelligence has awakened manliness and

self-respect in common men, and the recruiting-sergeant has to go about without the lash under his coat. The working man further knows now that there is a better future for his sons in the public service, in army or navy, than ever existed before our time. Even the emigrant ship has regulations for the comfort of steerage passengers, unknown until recent years. People always professed great regard for "Poor Jack," but until Mr. Plimsoll arose, they left him to drown.

Until a few years ago millions of home-born Englishmen were kept without votes, like the Uitlanders of South Africa, and no one sent an army into the country to put down the "corrupt oligarchy," as Mr. Chamberlain called those who withheld redress. But it has come, though in a limping, limited way. Carlylean depreciators of Parliament decried the value of workmen possessing "a hundred thousandth part in the national palavers." But we no longer hear workmen at election times referred to as the "swinish multitude" who can now send representatives of their own order into the House of Commons. If the claims of labour are not much considered, they are no longer contemned. It is always easier for the rider than the horse. The people are always being ridden, but it is much easier for the horse now than it ever was before.

Sir Michael Foster, in a recent Presidential Address to the British Association, said that, "the appliances of science have, as it were, covered with

a soft cushion the rough places of life, and that not for the rich only but also for the poor." It is not, however, every kind of progress, everywhere, in every department of human knowledge, in which the reader is here concerned, but merely with such things as Esdras says, which have "passed by us in daily life," and which every ordinary Englishman has observed or knows.

If the question be asked whether the condition of the working class has improved in proportion to that of the middle and upper class of our time, the answer must be it has not. But that is not the question considered here. The question is, "Are the working class to-day better off than their fathers were?" The answer already given is Yes. Let the reader think what, in a general way, the new advantages are. The press is free, and articulate with a million voices—formerly dumb. Now a poor man can buy a better library for a few shillings than Solomon with all his gold and glory could in his day; or than the middle class man possessed fifty years ago. Toleration—not only of ideas but of action, is enlarged, and that means much—social freedom is greater, and that means more. The days of children are happier, schoolrooms are more cheerful, and one day they will be educated so as to fit them for self-dependence and the duties of daily life. Another change is that the pride in ignorance, which makes for impotence, is decreasing, is no longer much thought of among those whose ignorance was their only attainment.

Not less have the material conditions of life improved. Food is purer—health is surer—life itself is safer and lasts longer. Comfort has crept into a million houses where it never found its way before. Security can be better depended upon. The emigrant terror has gone. Instead of sailing out on hearsay to an unknown land and finding himself in the wrong one, or in the wrong part of the right country, as has happened to thousands, the emigrant can now obtain official information, which may guide him rightly. Towns are brighter, there are more public buildings which do the human eye good to look upon. Means of recreation are continually being multiplied. Opportunity of change from town to country, or coast, fall now to the poorest. Not in cattle trucks any more. Life is better worth living. Pain none could escape is evadable now. Parks are multiplied and given as possessions to the people. Paintings and sculpture are now to be seen on the Sunday by workmen, which their forefathers never saw, being barred from them on the only day when they could see them.

By a device within the memory of most, house owning has become possible to those whose fathers never thought it possible. Temperance, once a melancholy word, is now a popular resource of health and economy. The fortune of industry is higher in many ways. Into how many firesides does it bring gladness to know that in barrack, or

camp, or ship, the son is better treated than heretofore.

Can any of the middle-aged doubt that some things are better now than before their time? Now two hundred workshops exist on the labour co-partnership principle. Forty years ago those commenced, failed—failed through lack of intelligence on the part of workers. The quality of workmen to be found everywhere in our day did not exist then. Sixteen years ago there were little more than a dozen workshops owned and conducted by working men. There are more than a hundred now; and hundreds in which the workers receive an addition to their wages, undreamt of in the last generation. In this, and in other respects, things go better than they did. Though there is still need of enlargement, the means of self-defence are not altogether wanting. Co-operation has arisen—a new force for the self-extrication of the lowest. Without charity, or patronage, or asking anything from the State, it puts into each man's hand the "means to cancel his captivity."

The rich man may vote twenty times where the poor man can vote only once. Still, the one voter counts for something where the unfranchised counted for nothing.

Political as well as civil freedom has come in a measure to those who dwell in cottages and lodgings. For one minute every seven years the

workman is free. He can choose his political masters at the poll, and neither his neighbour, his employer, nor his priest, has the knowledge to harm him on that account. One minute of liberty in seven years is not much, but there is no free country in the world where that minute is so well secured as in England. If any one would measure the present by the past, let him recall the lines :—

> "Allah ! Allah !" cried the stranger,
> "Wondrous sights the traveller sees,
> But the latest is the greatest,
> Where the drones control the bees."

They do it still, but not to the extent they did. The control of wisdom, when the drones have it, is all very well, but it is the other sort of control which is now happily to some extent controllable by the bees. The manners of the rich are better. Their sympathy with the people has increased. Their power of doing ill is no longer absolute. Employers think more of the condition of those who labour for them. The better sort still throw crumbs to Lazarus. But now Dives is expected to explain why it is that Lazarus cannot get crumbs himself.

In ways still untold the labour class is gradually attaining to social equality with the idle class and to that independence hitherto the privilege of those who do nothing. The workman's power of self-defence grows—his influence extends—his rights enlarge. Injury suffered in industry is beginning to

be compensated; even old-age pensions are in the air, though not as yet anywhere else. Notwithstanding, "John Brown's soul goes marching on." But it must be owned its shoes are a little down at the heels. Nevertheless, though there is yet much to be done—more liberty to win, more improvements to attain, and more than all, if it be possible, permanences of prosperity to secure—I agree with Sydney Smith—

> "For olden times let others prate,
> I deem it lucky I was born so late."

There is a foolish praise of the past and a foolish depreciation of the present. The past had its evils, the present has fewer. The past had its promise, the present great realisations. It is not assumed in what has been said that all the advantages recounted were originated and acquired by working men alone. Many came by the concessions of those who had the power of withholding them. More concessions will not lack acknowledgment. "Just gifts" to men who have honour in their hearts, "bind the recipients to the giver for ever."

The Chinese put the feet of children in a boot and the foot never grows larger. There are boots of the mind as well as of the feet, that are worn by the young of all nations, which have no expansion in them, and which cramp the understanding of those grown up. This prevents

many from comprehending the changes by which they benefit or realising the facts of their daily life. Considering what the men of labour have done for themselves and what has been won for them by their advocates, and conceded to them from time to time by others, despair and the counsels of outrage which spring from it, are unseemly, unnecessary, and ungrateful. This is the moral of this story.

A doleful publicist should be superannuated. He is already obsolete. Whoever despairs of a cause in whose success he once exulted, should fall out of the ranks, where some ambulance waits to carry away the sick or dispirited. He has no business to utter his discouraging wail in the ears of the constant and confident, marching to the front, where the battle of progress is being fought.

Since so much has been accomplished in half a century, when there were few advantages to begin with—what may not be gained in the next fifty years with the larger means now at command and the confidence great successes of the past should inspire! If working people adhere to the policy of advancing their own honest interests without destroying others as rightfully engaged in seeking theirs, the workers may make their own future what they will. They may then acquire power sufficient, as the *Times* once said: "To turn a reform mill which would grind down an abuse a day."

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